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# Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax

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## **JUSTICE FOR ALL**

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**Foundations of the  
Church's Development Work**

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**German commission  
for Justice and Peace**

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# **JUSTICE FOR ALL**

## **Foundations of the Church's Development Work**

**German commission  
for Justice and Peace**



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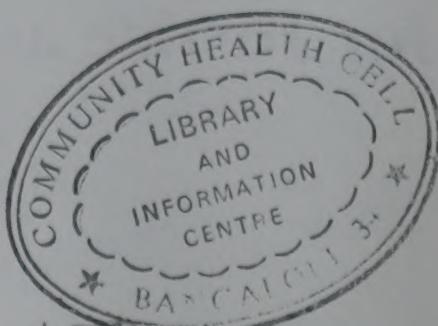
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## Preface

At their 1991 autumn meeting the German Commission for Justice and Peace, a body jointly supported by the German Bishops' Conference and the Central Committee of German Catholics, issued a declaration entitled "Justice for All". Whereas the Catholic Church in Germany had already comprehensively stated its position on the fundamental aspects of peace promotion in "Justice Creates Peace" which was published by the Bishops' Conference in 1983, it had not yet made any fundamental comment in respect of development. This document is therefore an attempt to provide general orientation on this subject.

Twenty-five years after the publication of the encyclical on development, "Populorum progressio", the following declaration makes a critical assessment of past experience and draws conclusions for future objectives. It then examines the fundamental aspects of the Church's development activities in a general socio-ethical framework and in the light of the Christian faith. Finally, "Justice for All" considers what is needed and suggests appropriate action.

The purpose is not to offer ready-made solutions but to provide a basis for discussion. We therefore encourage the various associations, lay councils, specialized departments and groups, in fact everyone concerned with development in theory and practice, to send their views and suggestions with regard to this document to the Secretariat of the German Commission for Justice and Peace.

In conclusion, we wish to thank all those who have kindly given their advice and participated enthusiastically in the preparation of this declaration.

Bonn, 5 November 1991

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Auxiliary Bishop in Trier  
President of the German  
Commission for Justice  
and Peace

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Bishop of Limburg  
Chairman of the Project Group  
"Justice for All"

## Introduction: Our Concerns

Achieving social justice, promoting and safeguarding peace, preserving Creation - those are the huge tasks facing mankind at the end of this century. Its future depends on how these challenges are met. Nothing less than mankind's survival in dignity is at stake. All are affected, all are urged to take action.

### One world

We take our guidance from the Christian faith. It tells us there is only one Creator. The whole world is his Creation. All humans have the common feature of being made in God's image. God loved this world so much that he sacrificed his only son for it (Jn 3,16).

Unlike previous generations, people can today experience the world's oneness. Transport and communication, especially the media, have brought individuals and nations close together. But in industry, society and politics, too, interaction, integration and interdependence are growing beyond traditional boundaries and barriers. The "one world" is thus taking ever more concrete shape.

Yet the links are not equal. In many ways the North dominates the South. On the other hand, the wealthy nations cannot remain permanently unaffected by what is going on in the poor regions of the world. In a sea of discontent and oppression, poverty and ecological destruction, there can be no island of peace, freedom and prosperity, a place where the natural foundations of life are secure. Any attempt to maintain one is not only morally wrong but doomed to failure. The industrial countries already perceive many of the weapons they have sold to developing nations as a threat to themselves. The North already has forebodings of a massive flow of refugees caused by spreading poverty in the

South. And we can already predict that destructions of the world's rain forests will change the climate in our latitudes as well.

### Challenges

A world growing together in this way places on us all a responsibility that is as global as the problems confronting us. We cannot allow ourselves to be provincial in our attitudes and action.

Required is

- a will for peace that ranges beyond our own country and beyond Europe. It must be reflected in our contribution to the settlement of international conflicts and in our commitment to a stable world order;
- the pursuit of social justice and defence of human rights not only on a national or European but on a global scale. We must perceive the fate of the poor nations as an International Social Question in which we are actively involved through profits and as potential victims. The goal is a universal economic and social order which guarantees survival and the exercise of human rights for all peoples; and
- a constant endeavour to preserve the integrity of Creation. We shall only be able to cope with present dangers if we strive to assert internationally valid ecological standards as indispensable elements of the world order.

### Development

This declaration "Justice for All" is intended to serve the development of peoples, the International Social Question of our time. This task is closely linked with the two other major challenges of

this epoch, the promotion and safeguarding of peace and the protection of our natural sources of life. Poverty cannot be overcome without peace. Without effective protection for the environment man's living space will grow smaller and poverty will continue to spread. There are clear indicators: desert landscapes are spreading and once cultivable land is becoming barren.

But it is likewise true that without development in the South the social problems and conflicts there will get worse. Without development in harmony with nature the nations of the South will not be able to play their part in warding off the threatening ecological disaster. And without development there will be no stopping the population explosion.\* These sources of conflict will increasingly affect the more stable countries in the South and then the industrial countries. They will undermine their domestic stability and their mutual relations, and ultimately threaten regional and global peace.

### Crisis

Development is vital for the future of mankind. At present, however, it is beset by a serious crisis. The International Social Question threatens to fade even more from the field of vision of the wealthy nations. There is growing disappointment at the abortive efforts of decades. This is partly because the magnitude of the problems and the duration of the necessary effort to solve them were for a long time greatly underestimated. No one should ignore, of course, the development achievements of thirty years - indeed, many countries have made economic and social progress and standards of living have improved for a great number of

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\* The problem of population growth cannot be surveyed in the necessary detail in this document. It has been comprehensively covered in "Poverty and Population Growth in the Third World", published by the Research Group on the Universal Tasks of the Church of the German Bishops' Conference, Bonn 1990.

people - but the overall balance is negative. The lasting effects of development have been few. It has not been possible to reduce mass poverty. Today there are more than one billion people on earth who lack the basic necessities of life. Day in, day out forty thousand children die of starvation or as the result of diseases which need not prove fatal if basic health care were available.

Except for a small number of countries, mainly in South East Asia, the gap between rich and poor countries has grown larger. Many developing countries are still dependent on the proceeds from a single or very few commodities, so that price fluctuations have dangerous repercussions on the economy as a whole. A large number have been seriously affected by the world debt crisis. Rapid population growth limits the effects of development initiatives or negates them completely. Overexploitation of natural resources creates new problems. All these are the outcome of underdevelopment or misguided development, but they are also obstacles to further development.

Conditions in many countries in the South still obstruct development. As in the past, official development assistance from the industrial countries is not infrequently siphoned off by elite groups. Almost everywhere essential agricultural reforms have quickly run aground. Seldom are democracy and legal security guaranteed for all. Domestic instability has often meant greater power for the military and security forces. And this has meant even fewer funds for economic and social recovery. In many instances where revolutionary regimes have embarked upon radical courses, the result has been more oppression and less economic efficiency.

In many cases development policy models, too, can be said to have failed. Often this is a source of great disappointment and helplessness among experts, but also among the various non-governmental and Church organizations involved in development activities.

Is development no more than a sieve? What are we achieving with it, and indeed what damage are we possibly doing? Is our development wrong development? What does "development" mean anyway? Who has to develop, and into what? Ought we not find a concept of development that embraces not only the South but the North as well?

Development problems do not enjoy high priority in the overall policy of the industrial countries. The aid target unanimously proclaimed by the member states of the United Nations is 0.7 per cent of gross national product. Neither the Federal Republic of Germany nor most other industrial countries achieve anything like this proportion. Overseas development is of only secondary importance to the wealthy countries in the context of their foreign and economic policies and trade relations. Protectionism and export subsidies in the agricultural sector, which is so vital to many developing countries, cancel out the development assistance they receive.

In the opinion of many experts the eighties were a "lost decade" for the world's poorest countries in terms of development, but in the nineties even less interest is being taken in their fate. Following the collapse of the communist system in Central and Eastern Europe, the political effort, and funds, are being directed towards the restructuring of Europe. The ending of the East-West conflict affords new opportunities for a coordinated European development policy and, in the medium and long term, for a redistribution of defence expenditure to development projects. This situation also offers the developing countries, who in the past more or less followed in the wake of the communist-ruled countries, the chance to reorganize themselves along democratic lines. At the same time, however, the "Third World" has lost some of its strategic significance. As a result, these countries will not be able to seize those opportunities unless governments and people are made aware of them. What is needed is a greater

determination to increase material assistance and to enter into a dialogue based on partnership on the spiritual as well as the political and moral foundations of state and society in the one, integrating world.

#### Purpose of this declaration

In this on the whole not very encouraging situation we wish to state our position as a Church and as Christians. Our aim with this declaration is to reemphasize the importance of development policy and of the work of non-governmental organizations and especially the Church. After 30 years of international development and of Church activity in this field, and 25 years after the publication of the encyclical "Populorum progressio", we feel the time has come

- to evaluate past experience and gain new insights for future strategies (Part 1);
- to review the foundations of the Church's development activities, both in a general socio-ethical context (Part 2) and in the light of the Christian faith (Part 3); and
- to derive from the results a concept and motivation for further action (Part 4).

Each part is intended to be complete in itself. Thus, some repetitions have been unavoidable. Many parts begin with a summary for the sake of clarity. The countries and regions concerned are regularly referred to as "developing countries", "countries of the South", "the South", "poor countries", and "Third World". We have decided to stick to this generally used terminology although we are aware of the drawbacks.

This declaration concerns the Church's development work, which cannot be confined to the material assistance and personnel provided by its organizations and initiatives. Its contribution to development also embraces the task of "making people aware of the situation" and of "acting as advocate of the developing countries" (EF 1.2.2). Thus the declaration must cover the whole development process, considering all the aspects and all parties involved.

The range has been limited in two respects, however. In view of the critical situation of more than a billion people, we have focused on combating poverty. As a result, less attention has been paid to the question of socio-political models, which has become increasing topical in many developing countries, especially since the decline of communism, although we do emphasize its importance as a challenge for the Churches. For the same reason we have had to forgo detailed examination of the international economic order. This matter has been left for consideration by individual groups of experts.

We realize that our declaration represents the point of view of one of the Churches in an industrial country. Thus our deliberations must be open to critical examination in the dialogue with the poor in the "Third World", and this must include the question whether the fundamental notion of "development" is still appropriate. Although this declaration is the work of Europeans and has to be seen in the context of European discussion, we have done our best to incorporate proposals and demands which reflect the views of the "Third World".

We address this declaration both to Christians and to all concerned with or interested in development policy and development activities. Its aim not least is to encourage all those who strive in Church and other organizations to increase society's awareness of the suffering and rights of the world's poor. We do not claim to

provide complete answers or ready-made solutions to these problems. We therefore ask Christians and non-Christians alike, both in Europe and in the "Third World", to enter into a dialogue with us on these crucial issues.

### Part 1. Experience and Aims

#### 1.1 Concepts and results of international development policy

##### Growth-oriented strategies

Until the seventies international development programmes were largely based on growth-oriented strategies. These strategies were not able, however, to overcome mass poverty in the "Third World". Indeed, they were partly the cause of social and cultural instability.

The first international programmes specifically concerned with development date back to the fifties. Even the early official documents, such as the United Nations report of 1951, include the terminology that prevailed in policy concepts up to the seventies: "development = growth", "development through growth". Economic growth appeared to be the key to the manifold socio-economic problems of, as they were called in those days, "the underdeveloped countries" and to the improvement of their living conditions. Hardly any consideration was given to the question how the fruits of that growth were to be distributed. It was assumed that in the course of time there would be a trickle-down effect, that the poor sections of the community would automatically benefit.

Since the absence of growth in the developing countries was largely considered to be the result of a shortage of capital, it was felt that the problem could be solved by transferring capital

from the industrial countries. Thus the task of official development aid was to provide funds for growth-oriented sectors in "Third World" countries. The money was used primarily for industrialization, and there was a clear preference for large-scale projects. The developing countries were expected (and wanted) to copy the industrial countries, thus speeding up the development process and making up the leeway.

Throughout the sixties development stayed within the framework of growth-oriented policies, but increasing attention was given to the promotion of international trade. Increased efforts were made to integrate the developing countries into the system of world trade and thus create further possibilities for growth. The slogan at international conferences was "trade in place of aid".

In the early seventies it became more and more obvious that development policy, which was more or less one-sidedly aimed at promoting growth, despite some success, had failed to achieve the crucial breakthrough. In 1973 the then President of the World Bank, Robert McNamara, put it bluntly (Nairobi Fanfare): Social conditions in the "Third World" were constantly deteriorating, he said. His words marked the end of an epoch in the field of development.

The fact was that although nearly all developing countries had increased their average growth rates, some of them considerably, the benefits of that growth had not "trickled down" to the lower strata of society. The elite had grown richer but the poor had remained poor. Indeed, on a global scale, the number of those living in absolute poverty, that is to say those who lacked even the basic necessities of life, had increased. Many industrial projects had failed and been left in ruins, or they were continually dependent upon spares, equipment and personnel from the industrial countries.

The concentration on industrialization had diverted attention from agriculture and rural areas. The consequences were migration and sprawling urban conglomerations. Nor did closer integration within the system of world trade translate into much progress for the developing countries. Relying heavily on exports of only a few commodities, their economies were badly hit by price fluctuations on world markets. Their terms of trade, i.e. the ratio between export and import prices, have been deteriorating since the seventies. But few countries have been able to develop a range of products they can sell competitively on world markets.

At the same time, the modernization strategies that were almost exclusively oriented to economic objectives have drastically changed the traditional habits of individuals and societies in many developing countries. True, changes in economic structures always result in social change as well, but in many parts of the developing world the radical transformations of recent decades have mostly undermined and destroyed traditional cultures without putting anything new in their place. Cultural alienation, social disintegration, the erosion of old forms of community life and the loss of traditional values are the consequences of a "modernization" which in both economic and social terms has proved abortive. Right up to the present time the importance of the cultural and religious dimension of development to the nations of the "Third World" is often underestimated.

#### Target-group-oriented concepts

Since the mid-seventies development cooperation programmes have been increasingly oriented to target groups, but as yet there has been no effective and lasting overall strategy.

The rethinking of the seventies led to a change in development strategies. Now they are all directed towards combating absolute poverty. They are target-group-oriented, that is to say development assistance is no longer aimed exclusively at improving the economy as a whole in the hope that those at the bottom of the social scale will eventually benefit from the trickle-down effect. The main purpose now is to improve the socio-economic conditions of the poor as directly as possible.

Such target-group strategies embrace several objectives. One of them is to ensure that the yield from growth is primarily and directly distributed for the benefit of the disadvantaged groups. Another is to promote measures which create jobs for the poor and thus increase their productivity. And a third, the most important, aim is to meet the basic needs of specific groups, for instance agricultural workers. Projects and measures have to be planned and implemented in such a way that the groups concerned are able to satisfy their basic needs through their own efforts to increase productivity. In order to achieve this it is absolutely essential for the poor to be involved in the planning and implementation of the projects all along.

Such development concepts take the poor as target groups seriously. They let them share the responsibility for development. But they are at the same time poverty-oriented because they are designed to meet basic requirements.

Although such strategies are by no means outdated, the fact that they have failed to achieve a breakthrough has had a sobering effect. One reason for some of the failures is that the new ideas have only hesitantly, and thus inadequately, been put into practice. On the other hand, the main handicap to the efforts of national or international development institutions has been pretty obvious in the last 15 years or so as well: They depend on cooperation with the governments of the countries concerned. But

many of the latter have been more concerned with consolidating their power, a policy which runs contrary to the aspirations of the poor to be emancipated and be involved in the running of the country as reflected in development cooperation strategies.

Nor should one forget that there are yet other factors which reduce or destroy altogether the benefits from development projects and programmes. One of them is undoubtedly rapid population growth, which is accelerated by widespread poverty. Others are corruption, mismanagement and exploitation, which are still commonplace in the "Third World". Many poor countries lack rule-of-law structures, which are a major prerequisite for lasting economic development, and generally the value systems and political models as a basis for the development of government and society along democratic lines.

The other causes of failure are to be found in our own backyard. The industrial countries are partly to blame because they continue to protect their agricultural markets whilst at the same time subsidizing exports of their own farm produce; because they protect their own trade interests and show too little concern for those of the developing countries; and because their efforts to resolve the international debt crisis are inadequate. The gulf between intention and reality, between declared objectives and tangible efforts, has remained. It remains not because of material constraints but because of the lack of political determination and support from the public at large.

## 1.2 Church experience in the field of development cooperation

For over 30 years the development contribution of the Catholic Church in the Federal Republic of Germany has been manifest in the activities of various institutions and initiatives. As the histo-

try of the relief organization MISEREOR shows, it has passed through different phases.

The Church has always contributed to development in the former "missionary countries". Development activities as we know them today became a separate branch of Church activity in the late fifties. Since then the Catholic Church in the Federal Republic of Germany has had a broad range of institutions and initiatives at its disposal. MISEREOR is an agency set up specially for this purpose by the bishops. There are also the personnel services provided by the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungshilfe" (AGEH) and the "Katholische Akademische Ausländerdienst" (KAAD). A central body is the German Commission for Justice and Peace, which succeeded the "Katholischer Arbeitskreis Entwicklung und Frieden" (Catholic Council for Development and Peace). Special importance attaches to the various orders and religious communities who have about 7,000 German missionaries engaged in programmes who provide considerable stimulus for overall development, especially in education, public health and self-help organizations. Substantial missionary and pastoral contributions to development are also made by ADVENIAT (for Latin America) and MISSIO (principally for Africa and Asia) as well as the German Caritas Association (through its disaster relief).

There are also many dioceses, Catholic associations, parishes and action groups who maintain partnerships with similar groups in developing countries and in this way promote development projects and educational activities, and also help improve the exchange of information.

The Catholic Church in the former German Democratic Republic also had two development organizations, the Justitia et Pax Commission and the "Not in der Welt", an organization helping to relieve poverty and distress in the Third World sponsored by the

bishops. Both of them were fused with their sister organizations in the Federal Republic when the nation was reunited.

In the thirty or more years since it came into existence, MISEREOR has gone through three different phases which typify the Church's activity in the field of development as a whole:

- the sixties, when the foundations were laid;
- the seventies through to the mid-eighties, which was the period of conceptual progression; and
- the years since the mid-eighties, which have seen shifts of emphasis and transformations.

#### Foundations

The sixties marked the beginning of the Church's development work. Some of the aims which MISEREOR adopted in that early phase are still valid today: to remove the causes of want, to promote help towards self-help, to enhance development through partnership, and to ensure that development programmes have a lasting effect.

Over the years the Church's efforts in the field of development have undergone a number of changes, but on the whole they have followed in the tradition of the early years. Thus it has always been taken for granted that the Church's development activities are a consequence of the Christian faith. The practical aims, too, apply today still, aims which were formulated in the late fifties, early sixties, viz:

- to go straight to the root of the misery and want in the developing countries, thus food aid is only provided in the aftermath of disasters;
- to help suffering people help themselves;
- to provide lasting benefit;
- to help bring about the necessary changes in society as a whole rather than choose specific targets; and
- to support projects originating in the developing countries themselves which seem likely to achieve these objectives. The Church does not step forward with its own projects but responds to the initiatives of partner groups.

The projects which the Church helped promote in Africa and Asia during the sixties were usually conceived and carried out by European and American missionaries, simply because they already had the vital initial contacts with local relief organizations. Nearly all of them are concerned with basic development activities and therefore are of direct benefit to the suffering people. On the other hand, there is little coordination. Those in charge are unaware of other projects and meet only rarely to exchange views and coordinate activities.

Dialogue with those affected, the starving, the sick and the poor, mostly takes place indirectly, via the project executing agencies. Gradually, people are coming to realize that the great skill shown by the missionaries in organizing projects may also be an obstacle to the development of the people. This is the case when more is done for than with them. As a result, the recipients of this help do not learn how to take over and organize things for themselves.

A different approach has been taken in Latin America, as reflected in the work of the DESAL (Centro de Desarrollo Social de América Latina) in Santiago de Chile. This institute, which was founded by Catholic lay people in Chile at about the same time as MISEREOR, takes up proposals put forward by groups of poor people on the fringe of society and works out a plan to enable these groups to form self-help organizations and thus free themselves from their destitution. Small farmers and leaseholders are encouraged to form their own movements, the farm workers form unions, those living in the slums have neighbourhood associations, while the industrial workers have their own unions. During the sixties, DESAL, in collaboration with like-minded organizations, established similar institutes in many Latin American countries. Many self-help groups also form regional or national associations. In several countries, like Chile and Ecuador, they have been able to influence agricultural reform schemes. Initiatives of this kind are soon to be launched in Africa and Asia as well.

The help from outside has a twofold approach. It promotes on the one hand the development and activities of these institutes, on the other the programmes and projects of the self-help groups and movements ("Promoción Popular").

The Church has learnt some important lessons from those early years. It realizes that it can only achieve as much as its partner organizations can achieve. The latter are crucial intermediaries, hence dialogue and cooperation with them become fundamental tasks in the development process.

#### Progression

In the second phase, from the sixties up to the mid-eighties, the early concepts were expanded and carried forward. Ever more

projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America were placed in local hands and were no longer tied to European models. The Church considered itself to have three main tasks: to provide assistance, to draw attention to the needs of the developing countries, and to serve as their advocate, as it were. This approach was endorsed by the Joint Synod, which in some cases set up its own institutions for this purpose.

During this phase Church development agencies emerged in nearly all countries of Asia and Africa, and in Latin America. The dioceses in the countries concerned provide qualified staff free of charge and ensure that their working conditions are adequate. Church orders form national and continental organizations which serve to promote cooperation. At various conferences and seminars they stress that concern for the individual's well-being is an integral part of their missionary commitment. The national bishops' conferences have their own agencies to deal with the supranational aspects of development work. The Catholic Church in the developing countries provides assistance, so that these agencies are gradually assuming a key role.

The more missionaries are succeeded by local bishops, priests and nuns, the sooner development projects pass into native hands. This often produces entirely new ideas for projects which are more strongly oriented to local social and cultural conditions and therefore enable the groups concerned to become more intensively involved. The broader range of activities and hence the wider experience gained lead to more comprehensive concepts and strategies for eradicating poverty. Education features prominently in this process.

Not infrequently the models previously imported from Europe are dispensed with. In the field of health, for instance, it is accepted that expensive hospital equipment cannot be made available for all

people in the developing countries. Basic health services are being developed as the alternative. They start from the principle that all inhabitants of a particular area should be provided with basic health care and hospital facilities at affordable cost. Similarly, technology adapted to local conditions usually proves to be more useful than that developed in industrial countries because it makes use of local know-how and materials. In addition, greater responsibility is transferred to efficient partners, for instance by setting up a fund for small projects. Improvements have also been made with regard to project monitoring and the exchange of experience.

Since the early seventies the Church has been systematically building up the public relations side of its development work in the Federal Republic itself. It is the unanimous view that development work should not be confined to making donations and taking part in technical discussions concerning development. The Church also has a specific role to play in making its members and the public at large more acutely aware of the needs of the Third World and the problems involved. It should try to exercise as much influence as possible on what people think about the "Third World" and the poor there and on the conclusions they draw.

A third role closely related to these activities is assuming sharper contours: the Church as "advocate" of the legitimate interests of the people in developing countries, focusing government and public attention on their needs and wishes. When MISEREOR was founded in 1958, Cardinal Frings (late Archbishop of Cologne) emphasized even then that it was the Church's task to appeal to the conscience of those in positions of responsibility. Now the UN Conferences on Trade and Development, for instance, are being used as forums for the discussion of development as well. An Ecumenical Dialogue Programme has been launched with a view to initiating joint action programmes with political parties and

associations. The political results of such initiatives have fallen short of expectations, however.

The three major tasks of the Church in the field of development as established by the Joint Synod of 1975 - providing assistance, enhancing public awareness, and advocacy - were at the end of this second phase unquestionably part and parcel of the Church's commitment to the "Third World".

#### Recent trends

New challenges have been emerging since the mid-eighties. Now our partners in the "Third World" want to have a bigger say in political decisions in Germany and Europe. They have found that the general conditions for development work in their countries are time and again jeopardized by those decisions. In the Federal Republic the Church must in its public relations work give greater consideration to the importance of social movements.

In recent years there have been an increasing number of cases where partner countries have not asked for project assistance but sought political intervention in the Federal Republic and other countries in the North. They do so on the ground that some of the major obstacles to effective development lie beyond the project level and therefore cannot be removed by local measures. They include, for instance, the consequences of the debt crisis and of violations of human rights.

Another new challenge relates to the return of many developing countries to democracy. In the days of military dictatorships the Church had assumed responsibility for various aid programmes and projects which would normally have been in the hands of

public authorities or non-governmental organizations. This ensured that they were not ruined or directed along ideological lines. As a result of democratization these organizations are regaining their scope for action, thus that they are now becoming partners of the Church outside the sphere of inter-church relations in the narrower sense.

There has been yet another new trend since the eighties. Social movements are increasing their influence both in a number of Third World countries and Europe. As in the case of the women's and Green movements, for instance, various groups and individuals - without forming umbrella organizations and despite pursuing what are often quite different aims - are able to mobilize considerable support for a common objective. They influence public opinion and also political decision-making. This new trend is also causing a shift of emphasis in the Church's own development effort, especially where public relations are concerned. In the sixties and seventies this was primarily a question of promoting its basic activities and showing it to be an advocate of the people in the developing countries, their "political lobby". Little use was made of the mass media for this purpose. The main target groups were the parishes and the various action groups within the Church.

But the more the "Catholic environment" breaks up and the individualization of both society and religion increases, the narrower the traditional basis for the Church's development activities could become. At the same time, people who have never been or are no longer closely connected with the Church and who will hardly ever be reached through the Church's traditional channels of communication are now taking a greater interest in its development work. So just as the Church's lobbying function has changed, so too has its informative role: It now has to extend beyond the Church's own confines.

More than three decades have passed since the Church embarked upon its own development programmes and thus extended its range beyond the traditional areas of charitable work. Today the Church is faced with new but very similar problems both in the "Third World" and in Germany itself. In the course of project work new target groups are discovered and the trend, as already mentioned, is "from project to process, from process to social movement". At home the trend is from Church-centred information at the grassroots to the formation of an open solidarity movement.

The Church's achievements in the field of development are today widely recognized. But this is no cause for complacency or self-righteousness. Not only the state and society must consider whether they are responding adequately to the challenges of the development process. The Church, too, and individual Christians must take a critical look at themselves. Are we genuinely prepared "to alleviate the hardships of our times within the limits of its means, giving generously, as was the ancient custom of the Church, not merely out of what is superfluous, but also from the substance" (GS 88)? Are we really going to condone, indeed do we accept, that "we are required, for the sake of mankind's survival in decent conditions, to drastically change our way of life, our economic and social priorities ..., to adopt new forms of self-moderation, a collective asceticism, as it were (UH IV.4)? Has the Church's development work really become a religious movement as well, as Cardinal Frings said it should be when MISEREOR was founded?

### 1.3 The Church's social doctrine in terms of development

#### Global perspective

The Church's social doctrine as redefined in response to the social problems of the 19th century focused initially on the

industrial countries. After the second world war it began to encompass mankind in the one world. Economic development became part of the agenda.

When, during the 19th century, the nations of Europe and North America were convulsed by the impact of industrialization and the beginnings of capitalism, the Church responded by redefining Catholic social doctrine. The formation of a small group who possessed most of the wealth on the one hand and the increasing pauperization of the new industrial proletariat, who for the most part had no rights, had thrown up a new "social question", that of social justice. The Church's very first social encyclical, "Rerum novarum" (1891), shows how that response came about. It deduces from the nature of man the principles of social and political order and describes and analyzes existing social conditions. From both it draws practical conclusions for dealing with the actual situation.

Whereas the Church's social teaching was in the beginning and then for decades afterwards related principally to the industrial countries and their social problems, its scope was broadened after the second world war. Growing economic and political cooperation and integration, decolonization, the entry of newly independent countries into the international community, global communication and cultural interaction focused international debate on the development of mankind and all people in one world. The starvation and want of millions upon millions of poor and oppressed people became the new International Social Question.

This shift towards a global perspective was first expressed in the words of the universal Church in the two encyclicals on social questions issued by Pope John XXIII, "Mater et magistra" (1961) and "Pacem in terris" (1963), and in the documents adopted by the Second Vatican Council: "Today men are so intimately

associated in all parts of the world that they feel, as it were, as if they are members of the same household. Therefore, the nations that enjoy a sufficiency and abundance of everything may not overlook the plight of other nations whose citizens experience such domestic problems that they are all but overcome by poverty and hunger, and are not able to enjoy basic human rights" (MM 157).

Development was thus firmly placed on the Church's agenda. Beginning with "Populorum progressio" (1967), Pope Paul VI focused attention on development aid and the need to restructure the world economy and at the same time shows the Church's commitment to development to be part of an overall concept of evangelization (cf. "Evangelii nuntiandi" 31, 1975). These beginnings are extended, developed and intensified in Pope John Paul II's encyclicals "Sollicitudo rei socialis" (1987) and "Centesimus annus" (1991). Furthermore, increasing emphasis is placed on the interrelationship of world peace and development. Thus in "Justice Creates Peace" (1983), the German Bishops' Conference describes development work, alongside protection of human rights and the creation of a global peace order, as a substantial element of present-day efforts to promote peace.

#### Development of the whole person and all people

The Church's tenet for achieving "one world" is to develop the human being as a whole. It goes beyond economic growth and embraces values and benefits which industry, commerce and politics cannot provide.

Development means movement, a process of change. By making development - or liberation - the leitmotif of the International Social Question the Church is stressing the transition from a rather static to a more dynamic concept of society and mankind as a whole (cf. GS 5). Hence the principles elaborated in Catholic

social doctrine are not insignificant. Indeed, when related and applied to social change involving much conflict they produce standards for determining development targets and ways of achieving them.

The Church's concept for achieving the "one world" is "holistic" or integral development. It was expounded in the principal social encyclicals of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II. It has also become the main guideline for development activities sponsored by the Catholic Church in the Federal Republic of Germany (cf. EF 1.2.1). The quintessence of this concept of holistic development is personal dignity. According to this "supreme principle" of Church social doctrine, "individual men are necessarily the foundation, cause and end of all social institutions. We are referring to human beings, insofar as they are social by nature and raised to an order of existence that transcends and subdues nature" (MM 219). Hence the development effort must be geared to protecting the human person in all its dimensions and fostering its development. The aim is the development of the entire person and - as every individual has personal dignity - the development of all people (cf. PP 43).

It follows from this that "development is not simply synonymous with economic growth" (PP 14). Although it has "a necessary economic dimension ... since it must supply the greatest possible number of the world's inhabitants with an availability of goods essential for them 'to be', it is not limited to that dimension" (SRS 28). Development suited to man's needs cannot be achieved "without due consideration for the social, cultural and spiritual dimensions of the human being" (SRS 9). "When individuals and communities do not see a rigorous respect for the moral, cultural and spiritual requirements based on the dignity of the person and the proper identity of each community, beginning with the family and religious societies, then all the rest ... will prove unsatisfying and in the end contemptible". Thus a "type of development

which did not respect and promote human rights - personal and social, economic and political, including the rights of nations and peoples" - would not be "really worthy of man" (SRS 33).

Looking back on the mostly socio-economic development strategies of past decades, we see that to the Church industrial development "(is) not a straightforward process, as it were automatic and in itself limitless, as though, given certain conditions, the human race were able to progress rapidly towards an undefined perfection" (SRS 27). In order to promote the human being truly holistically in this sense, development depends on values and benefits which the economy cannot provide. It is dependent upon conditions which government alone cannot ensure. And it pursues goals that are not accessible to science and technology alone (cf. PP 21).

Hence the Church advocates a kind of development which takes full account of the various dimensions of the human being. Those dimensions are interrelated. They are conditional upon one another and must therefore be developed together. If one element predominates or development is reduced to but one element, then such one-sided development, too, will not succeed.

### Solidarity

The International Social Question cannot be resolved without global solidarity. New alliances of this kind are necessary in order to advance the development process, and not least in order to remove global economic imbalances. The Church is committed to "a preferential option for the poor".

One of the foundations of the Church's social doctrine is the principle of solidarity. Action on the basis of solidarity respects

the personal dignity of others and seeks to shape social life in such a way that people see themselves as subjects of their individual development and in this process learn to treat one another as neighbours. Action on the basis of solidarity is one of the original ways of exercising justice, for it is opposed to individualism, which in turn is inimical to man's sense of community, and to collectivist ideas which suppress every person's individuality.

Every person should act on the basis of solidarity. But that solidarity must also manifest itself in social systems which counteract and overcome the "structures of sin", the term constantly used by Pope John Paul II to describe conditions which in many instances exploit the people and are an affront to human dignity. It calls for the removal of social imbalances which place a greater burden on the weak than on the strong.

The International Social Question cannot be answered without global solidarity, for solidarity is "the path to peace and at the same time to development" (SRS 39). It is the path to "the common weal of the whole world" (EF 1.1.1), which exists in "the human and spiritual progress of all men" (PP 76, SRS 10).

That is why the Church encourages the formation of "new alliances of solidarity" (ICFB): both among the poor and between rich and poor, at the individual, national and international level. Here solidarity among the nations finds its aim and appropriate expression in a "real international system ... which will rest on the foundation of the equality of all peoples and on the necessary respect for their legitimate differences" (SRS 39).

For an institutional framework, too, it is necessary to ensure and promote a fair political, economic and technological exchange worldwide. If the present "international imbalance" is to be rectified, a situation in which only the economically strong nations of the North are able to assert their interests, a "higher degree of

"international order" will have to be sought (SRS 43). There is a need to establish at international level as well "an economic system in which the market serves the common good", that is to say, a system which creates for the poor - whether individuals or nations - conditions which enable them to improve their situation through their own efforts (cf. CA 52).

The present world economic system cannot be described as just or as market-based - in the sense of a market economy tempered by social justice - as long as it lacks equal opportunities for all, including the institutional foundations, and as long as trade and the distribution of goods are so unevenly balanced. In this connection the Church calls for drastic reform of international trade, the world monetary and financial system, the technology transfer and the structure of international organizations (cf. SRS 43).

More than others, we as the Church must subject ourselves to the demands of global solidarity. Solidarity must be shown above all towards those who need it most. That is why the whole Church, inspired by the example of the Church in Latin America, identifies itself with a "preferential option for the poor on the basis of solidarity" (PUEBLA 1134). This option should not exhaust itself in mere non-committal sympathy for disadvantaged people in distant countries. On the contrary, by challenging us to work for political and social justice and to oppose oppression in its many forms it places us on the side of the poor with their suffering and hopes, their bitter experiences and struggles (cf. 3.2.1).

#### Justice, peace, integrity of Creation

In the Federal Republic the "Joint Conference Church and Development" has long proved its worth as an ecumenical forum. In the ecumenical process aimed at justice, peace and integrity

of Creation the Churches have jointly proposed that the critical nature and interaction of these issues affecting mankind be studied with a view to finding joint solutions.

The problems relating to humankind's survival have also become the focal point of ecumenical discussion within the Christian Churches, especially in recent years. In the Federal Republic the "Joint Conference Church and Development" (GKKE) has for some time proved to be a reliable forum for dialogue and action. The Ecumenical Process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation - not least through its assemblies in Stuttgart (1988), Dresden/Magdeburg/Dresden (1988-89), Basel (1989) and Seoul (1990) - has highlighted these themes. This process is not only important in terms of the social effectiveness of the Church. In their ecumenical dialogue the Churches give each other fresh impetus. Contact with other traditions challenges them to take a critical view of their own approach, of their own teaching and practice. As a result, the documents adopted by consensus during the Ecumenical Process contain, over and above the many statements on specific issues and practical recommendations, several fundamental conclusions which point the way forward as regards the Church's teaching, dogma and activities:

- In view of the global problems of our time, the possibilities for joint witness by Christians and the Churches must not remain unexplored: "We are convinced that Christians need to meet at every level of the Churches' life to coordinate their response to the threats hanging over the future of humanity. Their witness and life will be decisive." (BASEL 4).
- The joint efforts of Christians and the Churches will only be credible if they show courage and are capable of self-criticism: "For too long we have been blind to the

implications and demands of the gospel in respect to justice, peace and the integrity of Creation. Together with others we stand in new need of a new beginning (BASEL 42, cf. 41-45).

- The Churches have jointly advocated that the issues confronting mankind as expressed by the terms justice, peace and environment should be viewed in their global dimension, their critical nature and their interaction: "We face a cumulative series of interlocking problems which endanger human survival. Together they represent a global crisis" (BASEL 8). Our ability to meet our responsibility as Christians and as the church is measured by whether we can cope with the magnitude of these challenges.
- The growing awareness of the interdependence of the huge problems facing mankind, clearly manifest in the Ecumenical Process, has led us to pay greater attention in our social teaching and our development work to problems that have long been overlooked. Now we look at not only the human rights, social, political and cultural aspects but increasingly the ecological dimension of development as well. There is a growing realization that where the natural sources of life are destroyed, opportunities for development, too, are lost.

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## Part 2. The Socio-Ethical Rationale of Development Work

If our country is to generate effective impulses for development work aimed at meeting the needs of mankind, there will have to be "new alliances of solidarity" here too. Institutions, groups and individuals with different religious, ideological and political backgrounds will have to combine their efforts in pursuit of this common goal. Mutual understanding will not always be an easy task, especially where the many interlocking aspects of motivation as well as ethical and conceptual approaches are concerned.

Hence the dialogue necessary to bring about such new alliances relates not only to the specific aims and methods of joint action. The experience of recent decades rather teaches that it also depends largely on the responses to the deeper issues: what man and the world are that are supposed to develop; how and why we need to take action; what the fundamental goal should be. The extent of agreement or disagreement on such fundamental matters will broaden or narrow down the possibilities for cooperation.

How can extensive agreement be achieved in our pluralistic society? We offer our views on three areas of dialogue we consider to be important: appreciation of a global convergence of interests; a comprehension of justice which provides a basis for consensus; human rights. The defence of human rights not only explains our common commitment; it is also the doorway to agreement on the basic contents and the aims of development.

### 2.1 The North's interest in the South's development

Development cooperation is also in the medium and long-term interest of the wealthy countries of the North. However, to justify it and determine its nature solely on this basis would not be commensurate with the dictate of humane development.

In pursuing their foreign policies countries frequently invoke national interests. Where they have a democratic constitution their governments canvass the support of the people, or at least the majority. For some time now there has been a growing awareness that those national interests are not served if they are interpreted too narrowly or too selfishly in order to gain only short-term advantage.

As we mentioned in the introduction, no part of the world can master its problems by being indifferent to the fate of other regions. Widespread poverty in the southern hemisphere not only swells the northward flow of people trying to flee poverty. It drives people to overexploit the natural sources of life, thus threatening tremendous damage to the entire ecological system. Moreover, lasting mass poverty increases the threat to world peace. Hence it is in the North's own fundamental interest to promote the development of the poor countries. In order to ward off these global dangers together, and thus safeguard their own future as well, the industrial countries have no option but to form coalitions of solidarity with the developing countries.

The Church does not underestimate this motive for development cooperation. Successive Popes have pointed out that the consequences of missed opportunities for development affect mankind as a whole. The various dialogue programmes arranged in recent decades by the Joint Conference Church and Development in Germany have likewise stressed that we all depend on each other and derive from this interdependence the political force of common interest.

Much would be gained if what is commonly referred to as "enlightened self-interest" were to produce a policy aimed at mutual medium and long-term advantage in the field of development as

well. The question is whether this will suffice to resolve the international problem of development. Our conclusion is that it will not. For one thing even "enlightened self-interest" can stimulate but limited solidarity. Only where the rich countries derived benefit, only where they themselves would be affected by the long-term and global consequences of their failure to provide assistance, would they be prepared to assist the poor countries. This is an inadequate way of easing the burden on the South. Furthermore, such a limited definition of solidarity translates into an inadequate conception of development. It leaves out of consideration legitimate aims and demands resulting from the personal dignity of the poor and thus lacks the central notion which ensures truly humane development.

There is therefore no alternative: development concepts are not fully adequate unless they recognize and make allowance for the legitimate interests of others as such, in other words unless the developed countries think less about their own interests and more about those of mankind as a whole, unless they take the step from limited to global solidarity. This process of seeing our own and other people's interests in terms of the well-being of the world community is the subject of our deliberations on justice and human rights.

## 2.2 Justice

Justice demands that the exchange between rich and poor countries be organized in such a way that those who are worst off derive the greatest benefit.

Justice as an aim and principle is very important to our society. And it is generally recognized that the relations between industrial and developing countries must be commensurate with the

principle of justice. The response is less unanimous when one asks: What conditions and what modes of conduct are just? What standards can be derived from the concept of justice in the minds of the people in industrial countries for the development of relations with the poor nations?

In the language of ethics and legal philosophy, justice is first and foremost a moral attitude based on the determination "to give everyone his due" (Ulpian). Seen as an underlying principle of social order, justice implies a commitment to respect the universally applicable conditions of coexistence in freedom. The first among those conditions are human rights. On this level justice demands the same for all. Even where the aim is to achieve greater collective benefit, no one may be prevented from exercising his human rights (cf. 2.3). But this does not rule out the possibility of conflicting demands for the settlement of which the law has to provide appropriate rules.

Below the level of human rights differences in social conditions are unavoidable and quite legitimate. But there immediately arise such questions as: What differences are tenable? In which case and to what extent, from the point of view of justice, are inequalities in the distribution of economic and social rights, opportunities and goods, acceptable?

Recent discussion has produced the principle that social and economic disparities are only permissible if they "bring the most disadvantaged nations the greatest possible benefit" (J. Rawls). This principle is not directly concerned with ensuring the fairest possible distribution of goods. Its object rather is to correct unequal starting positions arising from natural or social distinctions. Thus justice in the sense of fairness is intended to provide the necessary balance.

It is a principle which has far-reaching consequences for the equitable development of international relations as well. As regards the systems of exchange between industrial and development countries, the one which brings most benefit to the poorest nations should be chosen. Only then, in the sense of this principle, can the structures of international trade and the global economy be considered just.

This undoubtedly establishes an important criterion for the further development of relations between rich and poor countries. Nonetheless, one should not overlook the fact that this is a minimum requirement and, taken by itself, does not fully meet our responsibility to ensure international social justice. For if none of the systems of exchange actually or theoretically available were capable of reducing the disparity between rich and poor, would we then say the choice of the best of those systems would be "fair"? We therefore emphatically repeat (cf. 1.2 and 1.3) that social justice means satisfying the basic needs of all and providing equal opportunities for development. The economic system, the trading system, must make allowance for this and be judged accordingly.

In connection with the aims of development it is also necessary to remember that, generally speaking, only those with the lowest incomes tend to be regarded as the most disadvantaged. This viewpoint is not incorrect, but it is one-sided. If we look solely at differences in income we are apt to consider the structures of the exchange between North and South, too, solely in terms of what prospects they offer for improving incomes in the poor countries. Thus the many social and cultural aspects of the development process are left out of consideration.

## 2.3 Human rights

If justice is to be more specifically defined and effectively applied, human rights must play a major role. As those rights are inherent in the personal dignity of every individual, their recognition suggests a universal consensus on the foundations of human coexistence. Human rights also make possible a consensus on the conditions and aims of development.

Justice only exists where the rights of man are recognized by a society based on the rule of law and where the exercise of those rights is assured. At the same time, positive law applicable at a given time must always serve the aim of establishing an equitable order of coexistence for all. With this in view, positive law is always open to criticism and further development. How very much law and justice belong together is most clearly and effectively manifest in the concept of human rights.

Of course, one must not overlook or play down the fact that human rights are often blatantly disregarded. Furthermore, some cultures still have great difficulty reconciling those human rights with their own tradition on account of their European origin. Time and again disputes arise over the proper understanding of human rights and the correct interpretation of the instruments for their protection. All the same, human rights are today recognized, at least in principle, as the basis for the coexistence of people and nations in the one world, and their universal application is now hardly challenged. Human rights are therefore irreplaceable as the common basis for development cooperation, which is the joint responsibility of people with different religious or ideological convictions and different political aims. Nor is there a better

basis for an intensive dialogue between industrial and developing countries.

The bedrock of all human rights is human dignity. Every individual is entitled to those rights by virtue of the fact that he or she is a human being. Because man is a person from birth and is responsible for his moral self-determination, he is entitled to the opportunities in society that enable him to fulfil his life as a person and to play a responsible part in shaping the world. Thus his "inner" freedom corresponds with his "external" freedom. Recognition of a person's moral autonomy presupposes that his or her human rights be recognized by society.

The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948 refers specifically to "the dignity to which all members of the human family are entitled". That dignity is interpreted differently by different religions and ideologies. To us Christians it is inherent in the fact that God made man in his image and allows him to share in his life through his redemption by Jesus Christ. Seen as a whole, however, the general experience and recognition of man's original freedom, which has no secular derivation, is in itself a solid foundation for dialogue between all humans and in defence of human rights (cf. GS 40).

The catalogue of human rights has been developed over the last two centuries. At first there were only the individual rights of protection from the state (right to life, right to equality before the law, right to property, etc.). To those were added political rights. Soon the social and political struggles during the industrial revolution began to challenge the "narrow individualistic interpretation" of these human rights. As a result, the labour movements began to demand participation in the nation's social and economic affairs.

This demand eventually won global recognition in the form of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that everyone is entitled "to realization of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality" (Article 22). Included in this second generation of human rights are the "right to work" (Article 23) and the "right to rest and leisure" (Article 24), the "right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself (i.e. every person) and of his family including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services" (Article 25), as well as the right to an education (which should be) "directed to the full development of the human personality" (Article 26).

These social and cultural human rights, like the fundamental freedoms, are essential for the development of the individual's life. Indeed, the Church spoke sooner of them than of the fundamental freedoms. Although the social and cultural rights are in most legal systems not explicitly codified as basic rights which the individual can assert in a court of law, they require the state to shape the economic and social life of the community in such a way that individuals and groups can effectively exercise them.

However, the proclamations of human rights referred to above do not yet have the force of law, that is to say, they are not directly binding on individual states. This is only achieved through international or regional conventions. Those deserving special mention in this connection are the human rights covenants of 1966 and the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms - the most effective instrument of protection to date - together with its supplementary protocols of later years. The human rights are today codified in the constitutions of many individual countries.

In December 1981, the General Assembly of the United Nations went beyond previous declarations and conventions and proclaimed

the "right to development" an inalienable human right. According to the report submitted by the UN Secretary-General, "development" is understood as the development of the human person in harmony with the community. Although the "right to development" and its binding application in law have not yet been fully formulated, the establishment of a number of international organizations and the conclusion of treaties providing for development processes ("international law of development") represent initial attempts to give that right legal substance.

The human rights are rights in the juridical sense that are based on ethical principles. The ethic of human rights carries greater weight than their legal character. It seeks to create the conditions in which all mankind are not only granted but can also exercise their rights. Both make human rights an important stimulus for development.

All human rights have a twofold nature. They are rights in the legal sense based on ethical principles. Although certain value-concepts are also manifest in other rules of law, in the case of human rights the link between the juridical level and the ethical foundation of the modern concept of freedom is so close that one can say the human rights have an ethic of their own. The human rights in the juridical sense are nowadays gaining universal recognition precisely because they are based on this constantly spreading ethic. Both, rights in the narrower sense and the ethic of human rights, are conditional upon and complement each other.

The human rights ethic, however, that is, the ethical principles underlying codified human rights, goes further than the legal character of those rights. It not only requires the recognition and observance of human rights, by governments for instance, but also envisages the actual exercise of those rights, with all members of the community actually being able to enjoy the

liberties manifest in and guaranteed by the human rights. Its object, therefore, is to establish the socio-economic and other conditions as the framework within which people can truly exercise their rights in everyday life. Thus the effective realization of human rights always depends on the dynamic force of the human rights ethic. No one who believes in the human rights ethic can evade the obligation it imposes. For the legal and ethical dimension of human rights must be distinguished from one another but not separated. Anyone who demands and invokes human rights cannot tolerate a situation in which others - humans like themselves - are actually denied those rights owing to the conditions in which they live.

Our thoughts on human rights as the foundation for development cooperation can be summed up in two conclusions. One is that human rights are per se the objects of the development process. They define what conditions worthy of human dignity should be like - which is the be-all and end-all of development assistance. In this way the human rights at the same time serve as criteria for the assessment of development concepts and processes. The other is that human rights establish an irrefutable obligation for all involved in the development process. All - whether governments, organizations, churches, groups or individuals - are obliged to support and promote a process of development aimed at enabling all humans to exercise their innate rights as humans.

### Part 3. Theological Foundations of the Church's Development Work

We Christians see ourselves called upon by the Gospel to help in the development of peoples. For our faith tells us that our thoughts and actions are only consistent with the Gospel if they allow the word of God to speak in such a way that first and foremost the distress of the poor is articulated.

#### 3.1 Deduction of human rights from the faith

Human rights are increasingly regarded as the universal rationale of development. To us Christians they derive from the Jewish-Christian history of the revelation. Our faith binds us to help safeguard and develop human rights and the human rights ethic.

The more human rights are recognized as the foundation of development and of our commitment to development, the greater the universal consensus which also makes comprehensive solidarity pacts possible. "If it is true that we require the solidarity of all mankind in order to solve the world's major problems of the future, then human rights should be the medium, the basis, of that solidarity" (H. Tenhumberg). The Church also regards human rights as the foundation of its own commitment to development, for it is "firmly convinced that promotion of human rights is a dictate of the Gospel and must therefore play a central role in the service of the Gospel" (MV).

#### The Church and human rights

Initially, however, the Church made hard work of recognizing human rights. The fact that the Christian faith can only be adopted in freedom and therefore presupposes man's innate freedom produced the first movements towards freedom of conscience

and religion in the early years of Christianity and in the Middle Ages, and those movements paved the way, as it were, for the broader range of freedom we know today. Yet it is undeniable that the belief in a rigid social order for a long time suppressed the dynamism of Christian freedom. The Church has adhered to such a pattern for too long. "As we are well aware, the Church's attitude towards human rights during the last two centuries too frequently has been characterized by hesitations, objections and reservations" (KMR 18). The impetus for freedom generated by the faith dispersed into the modern secular freedom movement, which made it socially effective, often in the face of resistance from the Church.

Since the encyclical "Pacem in terris" and the Second Vatican Council, however, the Church has not only increasingly and then very strongly perceived human rights as a "sign of the times" but completely changed its own conception of them. It now ponders their roots in the evolution of its own faith and asks how the faith can help safeguard and develop those rights.

#### The faith of Israel: human dignity, freedom, responsibility

We can go back as far as the faith of Israel to find that it caused a radical change in the understanding of God and man, without which the concept of human freedom could not have evolved. The previously dominant mythological view of the world is based solely on an inextricable mesh of divine and human reality. It leaves room neither for divine nor for human freedom. Israel, on the other hand, recognizes God as the sovereign Creator of the world, and the world as God's autonomous Creation. Man is the principal of Creation and remains at the same time a part of it. The freedom to which he is called manifests itself in a responsibility for the entire world as Creation (cf. Gen. 1, 26-28).

Israel's faith in Creation establishes man's prominence through his likeness with God: Thus "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him" (Gen. 1, 27). The dignity of man, the foundation of all human rights, derives its whole depth from man's divine image: "The dignity of man is the dignity of God's image" (Pius XII). It is therefore inviolable.

In its long evolution Israel becomes increasingly convinced that the God who chose it as his people is the one and only God of the whole of mankind. He is the origin of the one humankind and at the same time the guarantor of the likeness of all humans. Every person and all people are his image. This shows how much of its central content the modern evolution of freedom has received from the Jewish-Christian belief in Creation. This is the source of respect for human dignity and of the understanding of human rights as freedoms: Each and every person has the same dignity, and that dignity acquires its special distinction in a freedom which does not allow the individual to do as he pleases but challenges him to meet his responsibility.

#### Jesus Christ: love, the path to freedom

Man's dignity and freedom which constitute Creation are, according to the testimony of the Christian faith, confirmed and consummated in Jesus Christ. Through him freedom and justice are explained anew - in the sense of love.

In reality, according to the Second Vatican Council, "it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear". Jesus Christ "fully reveals man to himself" (GS 22). Just as Christ represents the fulfilment of man's being, the "freedom of the children of God", which the Christian knows to be his calling, does not mean the rejection, rather the fulfilment, of man's freedom.

From the relationship with his Father Jesus acquired the freedom to show the unqualified love for his fellow creatures which he proclaimed and lived. He suffered, died and rose again from the dead to free mankind through his love. In him we perceive the source of Christian and human freedom: to be loved and to love unconditionally and thereby to become free. Because we owe our freedom to the love we receive and the love we ourselves give, love is the path to freedom. Freedom ensues from the willingness to take the risk of love. Jesus Christ is the guarantor of this freedom in solidarity.

#### Christian faith - new impulses

Today, human dignity, freedom and human rights are rightly derived from reason. But they are not simply planted in reason without any historical context. Indeed, this comprehension based on reason has developed gradually in response to historical events. We have shown how stimulus for this process was generated by the evolution of the Jewish-Christian faith. And today still we can derive from the Christian faith both new dimensions for human rights and fresh impulses for their realization. At the same time it enables us to identify sources of danger. In considering our development work in terms of human rights, there are several points we should like to emphasize:

- Freedom is not primarily, less still exclusively, a question of independence but of love. It should not be misconstrued as an individual quality. It is for the most part manifest in solidarity.
- On the other hand, that solidarity does not nullify the individual's freedom. "Because man belongs totally and radically to God his fellow men have no right whatsoever to interfere with his life" (W. Kasper). Thus, government,

industry, commerce and society must from the outset limit their control over people.

- The Christian faith warns against the "God complex", meaning that man thinks he can create freedom himself and perfect it in the course of history. The Christian faith is based on the hope that the consummation of man's freedom lies in God's redeeming action. It thus protects freedom from all ideologies and utopian ideas whose advocates see them as the fulfilment of history and pursue the totalitarian elimination of freedom.
- Those who see in Jesus Christ the guarantor of freedom based on solidarity will not succumb to resignation and despair when all human endeavour seems in vain. They will draw from the example of Jesus the patience and perseverance to continue to risk freedom and pave the way for "God's justice".

#### Beyond the ethic of human rights

Thus the ethic of human rights is both supported and deepened by the Christian faith. But in the faith we also perceive its limits, for the justice inherent in the human rights ethic must always fall short of the "more abounding justice" (Mt 5,20) which, in the Sermon on the Mount, is attributed to and is expected of us in the name of Jesus. This creative love does not calculate, nor can it be measured by any standard or demanded by any law. It obliges others or comes as a gift when not expected, and it forgives them when they are undeserving of forgiveness.

But the love that "goes beyond what justice can provide" (GS 78) is not unrelated to human rights. In fact it renders them a service which they themselves cannot demand. That "'surplus' (of

love) of which the Church is a sign also nurtures human rights" (Tenhumberg).

### 3.2 Self-development through solidarity

Christian action has its rationale and yardstick in the conduct of Jesus. In his imitation of Jesus man knows that he has God's unconditional confirmation and support. The succession creates an environment where everyone knows that he is accepted and all can develop their personality in mutual respect. In our time the succession assumes the form of universal solidarity.

Christian action is only consistent with the Gospel if its rationale and yardstick are to be seen in the conduct of Jesus Christ. He wants mankind to have life and to have it in abundance (cf. Jn 10,10). He shows mankind that God negates all despotism, force and bondage and gives them "more" justice in their regained freedom. The basic message from Christ's life, death and resurrection to every human being is: you are loved by God and unconditionally affirmed and acknowledged by him - the categorical indicative before every imperative.

The contents of the Gospel and the manner in which Jesus communicates them to us are complementary. Jesus enables mankind to experience God's unconditional love by seeking without prejudice the company of those who are branded and excluded by society. He sides with them, brings them out of their deadly isolation and imbues them with self-respect and courage.

Christian action in the succession of Jesus is manifest in the exhortation to "help carry one another's burdens" (Gal 6,2), to receive one another (cf. Rom 15,7) to "think humbly of others as superior to themselves, each of you looking to other's interests

rather than to his own" (Phil 2,3-4). The experience of being unconditionally loved and accepted opens up the prospect of an environment in which every individual can develop in mutual respect and recognition, and in which - through all conflicts, even through all human failure - God's promises of a fulfilled, successful life can become more transparent.

But the faithful cannot be content with cooperation within the Church. Life in the Christian faith must constantly discover new allegorical figures for God's communion with man and in this way give ever new historical meaning to the cause of Jesus, which in historical terms is unsurpassable. The stimulus for action thus generated should form not only a religious-allegorical world but extend to society as a whole, its archetypes and organization.

Christian action in this sense also relates in particular to the object of development, which is the development of each and every individual. The development process reveals more clearly than previously that "there is an interdependence between the progress of the human person and the growth of society as such" (GS 25). At the same time, the successor community of the faithful opens up to a universal solidarity. Global problems also require new alliances of solidarity "in order to secure development in peace, in order to safeguard nature itself and the world about us" (SRS 47).

### 3.2.1 Action based on charity

God's unconditional love enables man to affirm himself and others in all their finiteness and limitations. This affirmation of others enables man to serve them. In accordance with the example set by Jesus, it is a service especially for the poor and weak. The "preferential option for the poor" governs the Church's develop-

ment work. Its aim is to enable the poor to take their life and fate in their own hands.

Practical Christianity is charity. It is relevant if it meets current needs in a manner that is consistent with the Gospel. Thus engaging in development activities means, in terms of today's social challenges, respecting the charitable dimension of the Gospel and testifying to the unity of our love of God and of our neighbour.

The Gospel teaches us the truth about man: He is only himself when he transcends himself. The Gospel shows us that God is his very self in that he transcends himself and becomes human. The two together are the theological rationale of the Church's development activity.

God's unconditional love for man in his finiteness and limitations is the fundamental truth of the history of Jesus. God reveals himself in Jesus as the love which enables finite man to affirm himself, which frees him to recognize his identity. In the succession of Jesus exists that love for our neighbour which seeks to enable him to affirm himself and to free him to recognize his own identity. In that succession of Jesus, the relationship between man and God (cf. Mt 25,34-40; 1 Jn 4,20 seq.) and God himself (cf. 1 Jn 4,7.8.12) are present. Thus unconditional love for one's neighbour also means affirming God as the unconditional love that has revealed itself in Jesus Christ as the foundation and focal point of our life together in freedom. The Christian's neighbour tells him the direction he must go so as not to lose the foundation and focal point of his faith (Mt 25,31-46). Christian action is charity. Taking Jesus as the model, its specific aim is to help "the oppressed". To help the poor and needy is to know the Lord (cf. Jer 22,16). "According to the Christian message ... man's relationship to his neighbour is bound up with his relationship to

God; his response to the love of God, saving us through Christ, is shown to be effective in his love and service of men. Christian love of neighbour and justice cannot be separated" (IM 35).

Charity implies more than responding to the needs of the poor. It focuses on the shadowy side of the individual's existence, but also on that of society as a whole. It pays serious attention to man's place in society, which all too often is only on the fringe.

Charity is extended first and foremost to those who so far have been denied the chance to conduct their lives on their own responsibility. This "preferential option for the poor" (cf. 1.3) testifies to the dignity of man. The Church "clearly affirms that man is worth more for what he is than for what he has. She bears witness to the fact that this dignity cannot be destroyed, whatever the situation of poverty, scorn, rejection or powerlessness to which a human being has been reduced. She shows her solidarity with those who do not count in a society by which they are rejected spiritually and sometimes even physically" (ICFB 68).

The preferential option for the poor is an expression of solidarity with the poor and a protest against poverty. This option is not discretionary. It denotes God's fundamental decision to uphold man unconditionally and to reject anything which impairs or destroys his existence as a human being. It testifies to God's basic decision to stand by oppressed and abandoned man in life and death (cf. Dtn 26,5-10; Jes 61,1-3; Lk 4,18 seq.; 6,20). It also directs us to a distinct place for our encounter with God: "Service to the poor really calls for constant conversion and purification among all Christians. That must be done if we are to achieve fuller identification each day with the poor Christ and our own poor." (PUEBLA 1140).

The Church's development work which is directed towards the poor in keeping with this option aims to give the poor more

self-confidence to develop their own initiatives, to enable them to take their life and fate in their own hands and to live not as the object of others but as the subject of their own evolution.

Preferential option for the poor means that the poor must be the focal point of the Church's work and of development policy as a whole. This does not exclude other areas of activity and other target groups. The preferential option for the poor confronts us as Christians and as the Church with our own obligation: to be aware of the situation of the poor and its causes; to act in solidarity ranging from tangible assistance to resolute cooperation in the task of overcoming injustice (cf. Part 4).

### 3.2.2 Action based on solidarity

Christian solidarity is rooted in the same dignity and calling of all men. It has no preconditions and opposes any limitation to those of like mind or allies. Christian solidarity at the side of the poor is a consequence of our faith and at the same the crystallization of our identity as Christians and the Church.

The Gospel, on which the Church's development work is based, focuses our attention not so much on the work itself as on the people, not so much on abstract poverty as on the poor themselves. They have a face. They suffer on account of the injustice of their standard of living. Through its preferential option for the poor the Church asks itself and society what people can expect from an economic and social order when they have to live on the lowest level of the social scale. It is only faithful to itself where it stands by those who up to now have not even belonged to themselves because their life has been made the means for the ends of others. Because God looks especially on them and has

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given them standing they have a right to our special love and care.

Christian solidarity with the poor is rooted in the same dignity and common calling of all men to be complete human beings. This common basis demands that we identify ourselves with the poor and with their cause, which is more than cooperation which reflects certain functions, more than cooperation on a quid-pro-quo basis. This explains why Christian solidarity does not require the fulfilment of preconditions. It is opposed to any restriction to like-minded persons and declared allies. It insists that development cooperation start from the separate identity of both sides.

Thus solidarity with the poor must not develop into the kind of welfare that will create a new kind of dependence for them. They themselves hold the key to the solution of their vital problems. It is crucial that they be able to generate their own energy. It is not for us to develop them but for them to develop themselves.

Charity stands for what the Church has always been from its inception and always should be: a Church for others, a Church for the poor. The poor say where the Church belongs to be in its right place. Solidarity shows what it means to be a Christian, where the Christian should go in order to be with his neighbour and Christ. The Christians are directed by the Gospel on a course that leads them not away from others but towards them. All other paths of salvation which lack the element of charity and solidarity lead to a dead-end.

Solidarity with the poor is an indispensable consequence of the Christian faith. But beyond that it also describes the place where and the way in which the identity of Christians and the Church are constantly renewed. Many Christians have experienced this in recent decades - especially in "Third World" countries - and it

has been an experience of religious renewal. They have lived with the poor, shared their poverty, become a part of the world of those without possessions or rights, from whose point of view everything seems different from the way it is seen by those who live in economic and social security. Through this change of location they have gained a new, a deeper understanding of Christ's "downward transcendency", of his incarnation and emptying (cf. Phil 2,6-7).

Our turning to God and our turning to the poor are not sequential or contrary but rather parallel movements. Christian action side by side with the poor is not one sphere of application of the faith among others but the very essence of its identity. "The Holy Spirit makes it increasingly clear to us that holiness today requires a commitment to justice and solidarity with the poor and oppressed. The restructuring of society according to God's plan is part of the true holiness of the Christian" (World Synod of Bishops 1987).- If the Church, in order to be more with itself, were to depart from social activity alongside the poor, it would lose precisely what it seeks to gain: its identity. "A religious community in the succession of Jesus has to tolerate being despised by the 'wise and powerful' (1 Cor 1, 19-31). But it cannot afford - for the sake of that succession - to be despised by the 'poor and weak', by those who 'have no man' (cf. Jn 5,7)" (UH III.2).

### 3.3 Development work - part of the one of the mission of the Church

The various Church services are closely interrelated and interwoven in their motivation and aim of evangelizing the world. Development work is today an integral part of that evangelization and is binding upon the Church.

As already mentioned, development work today has its firm place in a comprehensive understanding of evangelization. "Evangelization" basically means testifying to God's love for us in Jesus Christ and to our love for God; to fraternal love for all people which springs from the love of God (cf. EN 28). Thus for the Church to neglect the questions of justice, liberation, development and peace would be "to forget the lesson which comes to us from the Gospel concerning love of our neighbour who is suffering and in need" (EN 31). Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world are "a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or ... of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation" (IM 6).

The Church's commitment to development is not a marginal aspect of the basic Christian fulfilment. It is rather a binding expression of the Church's present-day commitment to the evangelization of the world. "The Christian proclamation of the beginning of the Kingdom of God and social commitment in the succession of Christ ... - cannot be separated - even if the one is a consequence of the other - but must be perceived and fulfilled both individually and jointly as integral parts of the comprehensive Church mission. That is why the various services for evangelization and missionary work, social assistance, development and peace are closely interrelated in the motivation of practical fulfilment. Together they represent the one mission and the common aim: reconciliation between God and mankind in justice and love. (cf. 2 Cor 5,14-21)" (EF 0.4).

The Church does not want its contribution to holistic development to be regarded as the point of entry and thus the instrument of direct missionary work. Both the missionary service and development activity would suffer if their respective characteristics and independence were ignored. But although development work is not a missionary means, it is nevertheless a manifestation and

verification of the Christian message. Charity, too, is the Word of God. It shows how people can live if Christians do what they believe in.

The truth of the message which makes people free (cf. Jn 8,23) is intended to lead man to himself, to an authentic life and to the recognition of his true vocation. We Christians owe the world the message and the faith in which the consummation of the world, the reconciliation of Creation and the salvation of man, that is to say his total liberation, first become visible (cf. RM 10-11; 52-59). The fact that social services, too, are performed directly by the Church in many developing countries is due to local conditions. Frequently the Church has to provide "subsidiary" temporary help in matters which in other parts of the world are the direct responsibility of the secular authorities.

### 3.4 The future of the world

As Christians and Church our mission is to project our hope for life on earth through our actions. Our hope focuses on the endless possibilities available to God, who will consummate this world. In practice this means that the Christian must treat all people and things as they appear in the light of that consummation and resolutely shape the world in pursuit of this objective.

The Christian hope for the future concerns this world - though in relation to God's limitless possibilities for it (cf. Jes 11,5-9; 32, 15-20). We Christians hope for the ultimate fulfilment of man's expectations and are ourselves moving towards the possibilities already apparent.

In our time more and more people are realizing that it is better not simply to rely on the progress associated with enlightenment

and technology, in the naive belief that it will be conducive to development. They are beginning to feel the longing which cannot be satisfied by the promises of technology and industry. They sense what faith tells us Christians: The world always promises more than itself. If people experience the inceptive yet finite fulfilment of their longing after a successful life they can become more receptive to possibilities not yet exhausted.

Thus our hope leads us right into the centre of our earthly life. It enables us to recognize in this world, with its plans for the future and disappointments, its new departures and failures, the promise of a reconciled Creation (cf. Col 1,20) and its consummation. This means here and now: treating all people and things as they appear in the light of their consummation. From this we derive the ability to distinguish even now between positive and negative. Hence the purpose of the Church's action in the light of the faith is twofold: on the one hand to bear the tension between the successful forms of life achieved and its universal, eschatological consummation, on the other to make every effort to shape the world resolutely in pursuit of this aim.

Our hope forbids us to accept the inhumanities of our world or, worse still, to consort with the rulers and systems which perpetrate injustice in pursuit of totalitarian aims that are an affront to human dignity. It encourages us to work actively to make justice a reality for all. It does not allow us to be content with the narrow confines of our own needs. "Where oppression and poverty spread, as now, throughout the world this practical responsibility coming from our hope in the consummation of the kingdom of God must also be able to go beyond its own private and neighbouring limits. The kingdom of God is not indifferent to world market prices!" (UH I.6).

We Christians share the hopes of not only the suffering and oppressed people of the world but of the whole of Creation in

bondage. We are not exempt from the "groaning of Creation" (cf. Rom 8,19-27), indeed we are bound even more closely to it because of the Cross. Where hope grows and becomes more resolute, the thirst for justice increases. The chains of bondage become more painful because the difference between the hope for the kingdom of God and the injustice experienced widens. We will not only refrain from fully exploiting man and nature but will focus our attention on the deeper causes of that exploitation. For where our relationship with the origin and meaning of Creation is out of tune, so too are the interrelationships among the creatures of the earth.

The hope we profess has its source in Jesus Christ. That is why it is basically different from an "innate existential optimism; it is so radical and so exacting that no one could expect to have it all to himself and only with a view to himself ... To dare hope to gain the kingdom of God always means to want it for others and thus through them for ourselves. Not until our hope hopes for others too, until, therefore, it unexpectedly assumes the form and movement of love ... does it cease to be small and anxious and to reflect our egoism devoid of promise" (UH I.8). Our hope is sustained by the fact that we give others reason to hope.

## Part 4. Prospects and Stimulus for Action

### 4.1 Ways out of the crisis

Our declaration was prompted by the tremendous challenges of our time, which include above all the International Social Question. We have not sought to conceal the fact that development policy and development work, in spite of many partial successes, are now in a crisis. It has not proved possible to overcome the mass poverty in the South, and various development cooperation programmes and projects have suffered major setbacks.

But our experience has shown the magnitude and complexity of the problems and the variety of the tasks involved. Our ethical and theological deliberations tell us that the decision has to be taken here and now as to whether we are willing and capable of assuming the responsibility for shaping an equitable world now and for the future. This situation becomes the touchstone for our moral reserves (cf. UH IV.4).

It was said on the occasion of the centenary of "Rerum Novarum" that "a new balance between freedom and justice" was required: "The precondition for that balance is that we develop a new awareness of solidarity. A new solidarity is the key to a future which ensures freedom and justice. We need a true culture of solidarity." (J. Homeyer).

In order to express that solidarity not only in lofty rhetoric but in action, a realistic approach is necessary: A realistic and sober assessment of the obstacles and difficulties, but also a realistic recognition of those factors and those small and large steps which give courage and hope, and finally a realistic confidence in the powers of faith, hope and love, the gifts of God that accompany us on our way into the future.

This kind of realism enables us to discover and use the scope available to us. That scope is greater than the faint-hearted and sceptical would have us believe. We name four factors which complement and fortify each other.

One is the growing solidarity among the poor in the South: There a potential for self-help and self-organization has emerged, in some cases supported by reformist government factions, a potential which is conducive not only to the people's immediate survival but also to necessary social change. Another factor is the growing trend in the North towards solidarity with the poor. Here we see the commitment of some sections of the population, and especially the Churches, being allied to the wealth of experience gathered by a whole generation of people who have been engaged in the practical work of development cooperation for decades.

In addition, there are the changed global conditions for development policy and development cooperation. True, with the East-West conflict now ended political interest has focused for the time being on the dramatic events in Eastern Europe, which are tying up considerable financial resources. But in the medium and long term there is a real possibility that the North will no longer consume its energies in an internal arms race but will combine them in a common global effort to solve mankind's huge problems. This opens up the prospect of the nations of the South no longer being the battlefield and pawns in the struggle between foreign interests but being able to effectively defend their own interests. But this they will only be able to do if they are capable of settling peacefully and by their own efforts the local and regional conflicts which were largely suppressed by the iron vice of the Cold War, and if the international community provides better instruments and mechanisms of crisis management and conflict settlement.

None of this will come about of its own accord. Thus we can no longer permit ourselves simply to carry on as before, always trying to improve our standard of living in the vague hope that everything else can be paid for from what is left over, leaving the crumbs for the "Third World".

The approaches set out below outline the concept for development cooperation which focuses on the needs of the poor. They are also an attempt to show how the countries concerned can create their own social structures for this purpose. Great efforts will be required, both in the North and in the South. The industrial countries should not confine their development cooperation to material and technical assistance and specific economic policy measures. Cooperation in this field has considerable implications for our policy and way of life as a whole. Hence we shall also have to talk about lasting change in the developed countries as well.

#### 4.2 Preferential option for the poor within the framework of development cooperation

##### 4.2.1 Aim: a decent life for all

Our ethical and theological deliberations provide unequivocal guidance for our policy and activities within the field of development. Our principle and aim is to create decent conditions for all. All inhabitants of the earth, including future generations, have the right not only to survive but also to live a life of fulfilment in human dignity: "It is a question ... of building a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life free from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control." (PP 47).

Conditions worthy of the human race are more than the absence of material want. Implied is a situation in which the cultural causes and consequences of poverty have been overcome and the one living in poverty is no longer regarded by society as an "unperson" (G. Gutierrez). Decent human conditions exist where the poor can live and are accepted as subjects of their own action and history.

#### 4.2.2 The poor as the focal point of development strategy

Future development policy and activity must take account of the experience of the past thirty years. Today we know that the expectation that the fruits of macro-economic growth would trickle down to the poor is illusory, while projects which the poor carry out on their own responsibility often mark the beginning of a lasting development process for many people.

Thus the fundamental experience so far is that conditions worthy of man cannot simply be organized "from the outside". The poor themselves must bear the responsibility if their development effort is to be sustainable. Development can only prove successful if the poor can freely use their creative energy in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. For this reason self-help and participation are the main foundations of the development process. Outside initiatives must be directed towards helping the poor and releasing their creative energy. Development policy and activity must therefore be based on the following principles:

- (1) The object of development should be to establish decent living conditions for all. Development cooperation should therefore focus on combating poverty, both in its material and non-material dimensions.
- (2) All development measures and activities should be examined and judged as to their effects on the poor. Economic

growth, which is still necessary, must benefit them most of all. Other measures in the field of foreign, economic, financial and development policy, for instance, not directly related to development, as well as economic, scientific, cultural and other exchanges, must likewise be assessed in terms of their consequences for the poor.

- (3) The involvement of the poor and their efforts to help themselves are indispensable to development cooperation. This means, on the one hand, that specific projects should facilitate and promote activity by the poor to help themselves. On the other, measures not directly related to specific projects, as in the field of trade, must be oriented to the goal of broadening the scope of action for poor people and affording them opportunities to exploit their creative abilities in order to improve their own situation. Only when it proves possible to activate their potential for self-help can lasting progress be achieved.
- (4) A stable development process is only possible where project activities directly involving the poor are supplemented by measures aimed at removing the causes of poverty, whether or not they lie a country's social and economic system or in the impact of the global economic system. Such measures, designed to improve the structural foundations for the poor, will be the more successful the more they provide the poor with opportunities to help themselves.

These principles justify the aims of MISEREOR's project activities (poverty orientation, promotion of participation and self-help, partnership). They should be seen as the basis for development work focusing on these objectives. It is not so much a case of the Church enabling the poor to participate but of we ourselves participating in the efforts of the poor and oppressed to free themselves from their poverty and oppression.

In this context we welcome the Bundestag's 1990 resolution "to combat poverty in the Third World by providing help towards self-help". In that document the German Parliament notes that the reasons for the lack of success in the field of development co-operation lie in the "rather passive role of the poor in the implementation of development strategies" and "the neglect of the informal sector". It says that "greater efforts should be made to combat poverty" and that comprehensive assistance should be provided to promote the self-help process within the framework of German governmental and non-governmental development cooperation. We call upon the Federal Government to make this parliamentary resolution the mandatory basis of its development policy.

#### 4.2.3 Measures

A variety of measures need to be implemented, in the South as in the North, in order to establish and maintain a stable development process based mainly on the self-help efforts of the poor. On the one hand they should directly improve the living conditions of the poor, on the other help remove the internal and external causes of poverty.

In our view the following measures have priority. These demands and proposals have often been put forward - also in Church documents - but they have not been followed up with the necessary determination. We therefore urge all concerned to pursue these measures in their own locality.

##### In the South

\* The following measures are above all necessary to directly improve the living conditions of the poor:

- providing easier access for the poor to development resources, i.e. land and water, capital and markets,

technology and means of communication, know-how and education;

- extension of health care, housing and primary education, improved social security systems;
- support for the poor in their efforts to organize themselves, to defend their rights and to participate in political processes;
- special measures to help the worst affected groups, such as women, children, ethnic minorities;
- reduction of population growth by improving old-age pensions and the status of women, and by means of advice and voluntary birth control.

\* In order to promote industry and improve economic structures the following should have priority:

- promotion of indigenous agricultural production and implementation of appropriate agricultural reforms in order to improve local food production;
- diversification of exports in order to improve the country's position in the world market;
- development of adapted technology;
- measures to ensure the equitable and effective taxation of all and to combat inflation and capital flight, corruption and mismanagement;

- \* In order to preserve or restore the natural foundations of life specific steps must be taken to conserve nature and resources.
- \* Democracy and the rule of law as well as effective administrative structures and institutions of self-government are essential domestic conditions for economic and social development.
- \* The following are required in order to guarantee stability, security and peace as the prerequisites for a sustainable development process:
  - reduction of arms expenditure to a level sufficient for defence purposes only;
  - initiation of regional, multilateral processes of détente and disarmament;
  - establishment of regional systems of collective security and political cooperation.
- \* Development which ensures respect for the dignity of man and protects human rights calls for thorough measures
  - to enhance the people's self-appreciation and their religious and cultural identity;
  - to promote the people's own culture, to the extent that this is compatible with human rights; and
  - to improve intercultural communication simultaneously with specific development activities.

In the North

- \* The industrial countries, in our case principally the members of the European Community (EC) and the Federal Republic of Germany, are urged to modify and improve general global economic conditions in such a way that they promote rather than hamper efforts to combat poverty and enhance development. Priority should be given to measures in the field of trade relations:
  - reform of EC agricultural policy with a view to reducing surplus production, as for instance with regard to grain or beef;
  - reduction of subsidies for EC exports of agricultural produce which diminish the opportunities for developing countries in world markets;
  - removal of EC tariff and non-tariff barriers to imports from "Third World" countries;
  - removal of differentiated import tariffs which place a heavier duty on various processed goods than on primary commodities and thus hamper the growth of manufacturing industries in the developing countries.
  - Waiver of quantitative restrictions on imports of, for example, textiles and clothing;
  - stabilization of export earnings by preventing extreme price fluctuations;
  - further effective agreements on compensatory payments to small businesses for loss of income through price erosion, as in the case of cocoa and coffee, for instance.

- \* Also necessary in order to further improve the general global conditions for trade are the following changes in bilateral and multilateral relations between North and South:
  - country-specific solutions for debt problems through partial or complete cancellation of debts, in certain circumstances subject to conditions, or through conversion of debts into development or ecology funds;
  - improved technology transfers and flexibility in the adaptation of technology; and
  - parity composition of the multilateral and international organizations concerned with development cooperation.
- \* Such measures affecting the world economy presuppose a willingness on the part of the industrial countries to restructure their economies, with the burdens being borne by the entire community, and to thoroughly change consumer habits.
- \* Environmental protection and conservation of natural resources require above all:
  - effective measures by the industrial countries to reduce environmental damage and to restrict the consumption of energy and other resources;
  - a renunciation of "ecological colonialism", i.e. the switching to the South of ecological burdens created by the North (e.g. exports of waste), and abandonment of attempts to induce "Third World" countries, who do not have the means available to developed countries, to play a disproportionately large role in the pursuit of global ecological objectives

(e.g. requiring them not to clear rain forests but without giving them adequate compensation).

\* As a result of the changed global situation, the following security and disarmament measures are possible and imperative:

- reduction of arms expenditure to release extra funds for development aid; the developing countries, too, can be expected to cut their military expenditure;
- rolling back of arms exports by setting up the widest possible system of international control.

\* Greater emphasis will have to be placed on culture and religion as development factors. This will require:

- an intensification of measures to enhance public awareness and thus help overcome misguided Eurocentrism;
- public information and education to ensure that man's spiritual-religious dimension receives priority in the development process;
- a corresponding review and, where necessary, revision of development policy concepts.

To sum up, the essence of the strategy outlined above is that establishing living conditions worthy of mankind is an objective binding on government policy as a whole in both industrial and developing countries.

With respect to the North:

- \* The wealthy countries must focus their foreign, commercial, agricultural and industrial policies on this aim. The existing contradictions between policy declarations and practical implementation must be overcome.
- \* All measures and projects directly concerned with development should be reviewed without delay as to their actual benefit for the poor. At least 50% of the funds intended for governmental and non-governmental bilateral and multilateral development cooperation must be earmarked and used for measures and projects that are directly or indirectly intended to combat poverty.

With respect to the South:

- \* The governments of "Third World" countries must lastingly improve the domestic conditions for a development process benefiting the poor by effectively reforming their political, legal, social and economic system.

#### 4.3 Agents and fields of action

##### 4.3.1 Self-help and solidarity movements

A new partnership must be developed between the self-help movements of the poor and other movements based on solidarity with the poor. The ultimate goal is to form one huge solidarity movement. This is the only way to exploit the existing possibilities and to alter political priorities in favour of the poor.

The idea of development cooperation in which the poor are both beneficiaries and participants is not wishful thinking. The proposed measures are practicable and the targets attainable. There are no insurmountable obstacles to the programme's consistent implementation.

The main question is not whether and how cooperative development for the good of the poor can be implemented but rather whether and how the necessary measures can be politically and socially asserted. The lack of political will is currently the biggest obstacle, in the North and in the South:

- In the democratic countries of the North questions of development, its objectives and the means of achieving them, meet with a very inadequate response in the community as a whole. The interests of the poor are hardly ever present in the minds of the public. Thus they also have little political significance.
- In many developing countries self-help, participation of the community and political representation of the poor are restricted or suppressed because of the absence of democracy and the rule of law. In some countries which have in recent years returned to the path of or even reestablished democracy, the old social and industrial élites continue to hold power. Governments are either too weak or not prepared to enable the poor to exercise their rights.

These and many other mutually complementary obstacles are holding up development for the good of the poor. They are not easy to clear away. As we mentioned earlier, social awareness and political will in support of the poor cannot simply be imposed. Thus what is required - in the North as in the South - is the constant promotion of a dynamic process in which

- (a) the already available scope for action at all levels is used in order to give effect to the measures proposed;
- (b) the socio-political priorities are progressively modified for the benefit of the poor, so that in future greater possibilities will be open to all involved in the development process.

This socio-political process will only succeed if, as emphasized earlier on, it starts from the various attempts already made to promote solidarity with the poor and among the poor. Solidarity with the poor is manifest in the work of many different groups, initiatives, organizations and institutions in the industrial countries. Solidarity among the poor themselves - which Pope John Paul II described as a positive sign in the world today (SRS 39) - finds expression in the increasing efforts of the poor in the South to help themselves.

The aim must be to channel these initiatives into a massive solidarity movement embracing individuals, groups and organizations who are involved in different activities in all social spheres but seek to achieve the common objective. Others must be encouraged to pursue the same goal, and both public opinion and governments must be influenced accordingly.

Social movements, such as nature conservation and women's movements, begin with grassroots activities. But if they are to be successful they must permeate the whole of society. These solidarity movements in conjunction with and among the poor need, on the one hand, the unconventional ideas, creativity, vitality and sometimes the antagonism of unorganized individuals and groups, but on the other the expertise and experience of specialists as well as the financial and organizational support of established institutions. And they need not least cooperation with the public authorities.

All of these interfaces within the solidarity movement are also potential sources of conflict. Nonetheless, the strains can and must be withstood if all focus on what are basically the same objectives. The movements can best serve these aims by, on the one hand, helping to generate the necessary political pressure "from the bottom" and, on the other, by broadening the basis for mutual understanding in society as a whole by convincing people of the need for these efforts.

Solidarity with the poor goes hand in hand with the self-help movements of the poor themselves. The latter unite in order to defend their rights and pursue their interests. On the other hand, those in the North who declare their solidarity with them come out in support of the poor. They seek to give them a legitimate voice in the social dialogue and in international negotiations. In other words, they wish to serve as the advocates of the poor where they are not represented but are very much affected by the results. Thus one of the tasks of the movement professing solidarity with the poor is to seek to bring about in the North the structural changes necessary to eliminate the causes of poverty emanating from there.

Those who stand up for the poor always run the risk of tutelage and paternalism. That risk can only be removed by creating a kind of partnership between the two solidarity movements which provides the basis for a constant exchange among the different groups and organizations. Both need and must learn from one another.

The following is an outline of the possibilities open to individuals, groups, organizations and institutions who, in their different ways, are involved in the solidarity movement. By using those possibilities they can help promote development cooperation for the poor, and in so doing initiate and stabilize the necessary socio-political process. Proposals are also advanced for

establishing stronger links and closer cooperation among the various organizations concerned.

#### 4.3.2 Agents and fields of action in the developing countries

##### 4.3.2.1 Self-help and self-help organizations of the poor

###### Possibilities and limitations

The contribution which the poor can make towards the process of development cooperation lies in their self-help projects. Their ability to help themselves is manifest, for example, in the various activities of the "informal" sector, through which they organize the means for their survival. It is also expressed in a variety of joint initiatives by village and slum communities to provide water and electricity and build roads and sewage systems by dint of their own efforts. And it is reflected in the growing significance of small loan cooperatives which have a remarkable saving and repayment rate.

On the other hand, one should not overestimate the self-help ability of the poor. The struggle for survival in conditions of distress often causes physical and psychological damage. It also encourages rivalry, conflicts of interests and hostility among the poor themselves and thus creates an obstacle to self-help activities involving the whole community. Particularly the most destitute people, the sick and disabled, the children and elderly, the alcoholics and drug addicts, have very limited means of helping themselves. Moreover, the scope for self-help is often greatly restricted by the prevailing power relationships and the policies of some governments.

### Social and political self-help organizations of the poor

Also falling within the category of those promoting self-help are groups and organizations who represent and help the poor where they lack the necessary strength and resources. This collective self-help is manifest, for instance, in the formation of local consumer and producer cooperatives, guarantee groups and water committees, as well as education, advisory and service centres, but also in democratically established organizations such as trade unions and bodies representing the interests of women, ethnic minorities, craftsmen, smallholders and people with no land at all. These organizations, supported by the poor themselves, are indispensable for maintaining and spreading self-help movements. They therefore need continuous support from outside.

Self-help activities always have political significance as well. The ability of self-help organizations to mobilize the poor in order to achieve lasting progress throughout the community must also lead to political action and political organization. Here conflict with other existing political groups, and within the political organizations of the poor themselves, are inevitable. But the main criterion is that the participation necessary throughout the community should begin and be practised within the political organizations of the poor.

#### 4.3.2.2 Government in the countries of the South

In many "Third World" countries self-help initiatives are hardly able to thrive, let alone have an impact on the community as a whole, because the government denies them the necessary scope; indeed they are sometimes suppressed on a massive scale. Thus the governments of developing countries must be urged to pursue truly democratic policies and ensure the rule of law. The provision of public services such as education, health care, credit facilities and the development of proper infrastructures for the

disadvantaged sections of the population must not be left to the discretion of the authorities or depend on bribery. It must rather be based on declared policies as well as laws and regulations which can be upheld in the courts. Not until these conditions are fulfilled will the voice of the poor carry the political weight that is commensurate with their number.

#### 4.3.3 Agents and fields of action in the industrial countries

##### 4.3.3.1 Individuals

###### Possibilities available to the individual in industrial countries

The task of the individual is, first and foremost, to recognize the distress of the poor, to inform himself accordingly and to be sufficiently aware of the problems involved. Let us remember in this connection that there are poor people in our country, too, for instance refugees from the "Third World". Contact with them can make us more acutely aware of the suffering of the poor all over the world. Furthermore, solidarity with the poor presupposes that ever more people appeal to the conscience of others in their immediate environment and pass on information, that they consider their consumer habits and lifestyle, and that wherever possible they make allowance for the poor as well in their work. In political elections candidates' attitudes towards development should be a major criterion.

###### Donations

Financial support for effective relief organizations, for instance the Churches' charitable institutions, is also a convincing sign of solidarity and an indispensable contribution to self-help projects initiated by the poor. In this connection it is also important for people to make donations for public relations work in our own

country. Church relief organizations should set up their own funds for this purpose.

#### Learning about the situation of the poor

We also draw attention to the already existing possibilities for gaining first-hand information about the situation of the poor in the "Third World", and about their self-help efforts and strategies. There are excursions and exchange programmes, especially for young people, albeit still too few. Because these programmes offer information and experience on the spot they are important instruments of development education. Partnerships between dioceses and parishes play a crucial role in these exchange programmes. In organizing such programmes, however, it is necessary to ensure that they do not simply become thoughtless, cynical "tours" of poor regions.

#### Volunteers for development and social services in the cause of peace and reconciliation

There are also possibilities for young people to engage in practical activities in developing countries for limited periods. For instance, the AGEH, the German Catholic Agency for Personnel Development Cooperation, enables skilled specialists to spend several years working on development projects. In addition, several Church associations and dioceses send volunteers to developing countries for periods of between six months and two years. Participants in these social services promoting peace and reconciliation are mostly people with experience in social work or qualified craftsmen, while those engaged within the framework of partnerships are also assigned to pastoral activities and youth work. Some of the religious orders provide young people with the opportunity to participate in their activities as "temporary missionaries".

#### 4.3.3.2 Local groups

In the Federal Republic there are several thousand "Third World" groups and initiatives. They range from independent solidarity groups via working groups in parishes, schools, universities, trade unions and parties, to "Third World" or "One World" shops. They also include the various parish committees for missionary work, development and peace. These groups are forums for discussion and action by many individuals. They represent a potential without which development cooperation would not be able to generate the creativity and the motivation and willingness for criticism and self-criticism which it urgently needs. Often multipliers and experts on development cooperation emerge from such groups.

#### "Counter-publicity"

The International Social Question still receives too little attention from the public and the mass media. The "Third World" groups therefore play an important role in forming a kind of "counter-publicity". This they do through various activities ranging from information stands, demonstrations, street theatre, "Third World" festivals, film festivals, letters to newspapers or MPs and governments, and also through symbolic activities including boycotts of specific products or countries of origin.

#### "Third World" shops

Another kind of initiative that is widespread in Germany are the "Third World" or "One World" shops. Although they have a relatively small impact on world trade, their sale of products from developing countries do help ensure the economic survival of many small self-help projects. Through their efforts they are also promoting the training and political self-organization of the poor. These shops help people change their consumer habits, at least

symbolically, and their attitude, and they are focal points of local public relations work.

### Partnerships

In recent years numerous partnerships at local level have also emerged. Contacts are established with groups or self-help initiatives in the developing countries, and support, often including financial assistance, is organized for projects run by the poor. In this way all concerned can learn from one another. It must be remembered, however, that the selection and promotion of development projects requires an expertise which individual groups do not have at their disposal. In such cases cooperation should be sought with experienced relief organizations like those sponsored by the Church.

### Human rights groups

Support for people who have been persecuted on political, racial or religious grounds is also a necessary feature of humane development. Thus great significance attaches to the work of the many initiatives of Church parishes and local branches of associations and human rights organizations. Specific activities, such as the drafting of letters of solidarity and protest bring violations of human rights to the attention of the public and in many cases help protect the victims.

#### 4.3.3.3 Non-governmental organizations involved in development cooperation

##### Significance and types of non-governmental organizations

There is no doubt that a large variety of grassroots activities are indispensable for the growth of solidarity movements, but larger organizations, too, are needed in order to bring the cause of the

poor to the attention of a wider audience and secure effective contributions towards the cooperative effort. These include primarily organizations resulting from the merging of minor initiatives. There are also the various development and relief organizations, among them those sponsored by the Church, which are particularly important on account of their wide experience and the extent of the assistance they have provided so far. Their significance is also reflected in cooperation between the relief agencies and the government, which secures additional funds for the Church's development activities.

These organizations and institutions have very different structures and aims. On the one hand this corresponds to our pluralistic society, on the other it reflects the variety of the challenges linked with the development process. But in order to attain the common goal cooperation between them is often meaningful, indeed imperative.

#### The role of non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental institutions and organizations render outstanding contributions to development cooperation as co-sponsors of the solidarity movement.

- (1) The material support and personnel they provide for development projects and programmes are often exemplary, especially where they cooperate closely with self-help organizations in the South. The latter, who likewise have non-governmental status, are particularly suited to cooperative efforts on account of their proximity to the poor. This is where the partnership principle is put into practice.
- (2) Through such experience these organizations and institutions can credibly and effectively represent the poor in the social and political dialogue in the North. They must seek

to change public attitudes and urge parties, parliaments and governments to promote development cooperation projects for the benefit of the poor and for this purpose to improve world economic conditions. In so doing they can avail themselves not only of the proven instruments of public education but also of the mass media and dialogue with the government.

(3) Those organizations that have not emerged directly from the activities of local groups, too, should support such grassroots initiatives in order to help extend and increase the effectiveness of the solidarity movement. They can do so through information material, training courses and direct financial assistance, and not least through the know-how, experience and contacts of their full-time staff.

#### 4.3.3.4 Other non-governmental organizations

Development cooperation should not be seen as the exclusive field of individual groups and specialized organizations. If it is to emerge from its marginal existence to become a focal point of public and political attention it will have to have roots at all levels and in all parts of the community. Our society is largely influenced by the work of various organizations - trade unions, business associations, farmers' organizations, etc. - which have a special responsibility. The call for justice and a fair balance of interests which up to now has been the mark of many of these associations must die away where the demands of the poor are concerned. There have been serious deficiencies in this respect.

#### Development activities of societies

An important part of the work of these organizations can also lie in their efforts to promote the development efforts of corresponding institutions in the "Third World". German political foundations

have been active in this field for some time, and other associations from the North should seek cooperation with similar organizations in developing countries. This kind of cooperation should in many cases encourage them to give greater consideration in their activities at home to the interests of the poor in developing countries and to serve as their advocate at the political level.

### Catholic associations

Not least the Catholic associations in our country must be partners for self-help movements in the developing countries. Many of them were themselves formed as self-help movements in response to the Social Question of the last century. They therefore have considerable experience both in the setting up of local groups and the formation of central organizations which are able to influence national policy. Such experience should also be placed at the service of self-help groups and organizations in the South. Catholic associations are already channelling some of their support for partner organizations in developing countries through their international headquarters. They thus act as intermediaries between the self-help movements of the poor and the solidarity movements in the North.

#### 4.3.3.5 Decision-makers and opinion leaders

A broad solidarity movement requires the support of decision-makers and opinion leaders in politics and business, in the cultural field and in the media. They especially can help create a favourable environment for cooperative measures to help the poor and to focus public and political interest on North-South problems. Politicians, in particular, are in a position to represent the interests of the poor in public and to side with disadvantaged groups where it is a question of settling conflicts of aims and interests. Businessmen investing in the southern

hemisphere can develop the kinds of company that are conducive to the efforts of the poor to help themselves. They should respect the trade union rights of employees and contribute to high standards of training in the host country. Journalists help keep the public generally informed by reporting on conditions of poverty and on plans with which the poor can strive to improve their living conditions.

The solidarity-with-the-poor movement relies on the interaction of opinion leaders and grassroots initiatives. For this reason both sides should seek to overcome the prejudices which sometimes separate them and prevent unbiased contact and specific cooperative projects.

#### Exposure programmes

For decision-makers especially, direct contact with the world of the poor can leave a very deep impression. Consequently, development cooperation institutions in the North conduct "exposure programmes" for this group of people together with their partner organizations in the South. Participants spend several days or weeks living among the poor and assess their experience with the help of experts. The direct contact with poverty and with self-help strategies gives them a deeper understanding of the situation of the poor and arouses or strengthens their willingness to do what they can, each in his own way, to promote development cooperation projects for the sake of the poor.

#### 4.3.3.6 Government in the North

##### Development as a cross-section of the whole political spectrum

Governments in the industrial countries must be urged to give greater consideration in all their political decisions to the interests of the poor in the "Third World", whether in foreign or economic affairs, the media, or military matters, etc. Development

policy should permeate the work of all government departments. We suggested earlier on (cf. 4.2.3) how this might be done in the context of foreign, economic and financial policy.

### Development assistance

In outlining our concept of development cooperation for the benefit and with the participation of the poor we pointed out that more funds are needed for self-help projects. Here there is still a lack of suitable instruments which do not require heavy funding but are rather designed to encourage complex development processes on a small scale. What is required is an analysis of the needs of the poor as a basis for country-related programmes, as well as innovative sectoral plans with regard, for instance, to conservation, assistance for women, and support for the economy of the "informal sector". Aid for the informal sector should not be intended to keep it going permanently but rather to help integrate it over a lengthy period into the country's formal economic system - without losing sight of the interests of the poor.

### Policy dialogue

Policy dialogue with leaders in the developing countries is a specific task of northern governments. They particularly must maintain a constant exchange with the governments in the "Third World" to convince them of the need for measures to help the poor, to find tangible solutions and to advocate durable reform on the basis on democracy and the rule of law. This dialogue must be backed up by specific measures. They include, for instance, giving priority to countries who pursue serious reform policies to help poorer sections of the community over those who may be important to us from a geostrategic or economic point of view.

No official development assistance should be provided if the policies pursued by the prospective recipients conflict with the

interests of the poor and there seems little prospect of those policies being changed. The governments of the North must for their part be prepared to accept criticism of their own policies and to learn from that criticism. This applies in particular to the general conditions for world trade and to national policies that have a massive impact on the lives of the poor.

#### Governments and solidarity movements

The governments of industrial countries should regard groups, initiatives and associations embraced by the solidarity movement as - albeit often critical - partners and support them where possible. For if they succeed in making the public more conscious of the need for development cooperation there will emerge in the medium term fresh scope which governments need in order to press through measures that may be hard for their own people to accept.

#### 4.3.4 The Church in the South and in the North

##### A credible advocate of the preferential option for the poor

As Christians and Church we are only credible if we convincingly support in our own lives and in the life of the Church the preferential option for the poor to which we are committed and which we have proclaimed. We must translate that option into practice and support those members of the Church who make special efforts to do so.

We therefore appeal as well to rich and poor within the global Church to share with one another. We shall have to change our own lifestyle and consumer habits. We must reconsider our attitude towards power and authority within the Church. If we call for the promotion of self-help initiatives in the South and of grassroots activities in the North, if we call for the settlement of

conflicts through dialogue, then these principles must also apply within the Church: in the relationship between the different groups and forces within the Church in the North, in the relationship between local Churches and between them and their central institutions.

#### Dialogue on the social order

The local Churches in the North and in the South are called upon to conduct a constant dialogue with one another on matters of development. In this way they can use their experience for the good of the poor. In the present situation, which for many countries in the South - but globally as well - is a time of radical change, it is primarily the urgent demand for models, guidelines and political and social structures, and for the international order, which prompts this exchange of experience between local Churches.

#### Aims of the Church's development work

As Christians and Church we pledge ourselves to support, encourage and strengthen the massive solidarity movement among and together with the poor. We are called upon and appeal to others

- to denounce in public systems that are unfair to or violate the dignity and rights of the poor, to help investigate the causes, and to participate in the discussion of possible solutions;
- to provide financial assistance and personnel for specific development cooperation projects designed to help the poor to help themselves overcome their poverty;

- to provide moral, financial and organizational support for groups, associations and organizations of the poor themselves and those working with them, and to provide platforms for discussion and exchange. The Church should not shrink back from providing support for self-help movements especially where political conflict occurs;
- to evaluate the experience gained by the self-help movements of the poor and of the solidarity movements in the North, especially those engaged in Church development cooperation projects, and in this way provide valuable stimulus for governmental and non-governmental development cooperation activities and research;
- to make use of and raise for discussion in committees, associations and parishes the experience gained by missionary orders who, through their direct personal contacts and their international organizations, serve as a bridge between the poor countries of the South and the wealthy countries of the North;
- to intensify the dialogue with social groups, political parties and governments in order to give concrete shape to and carry out the tasks of development cooperation for the sake of the poor. The Ecumenical Dialogue Programme of the two major Churches in Germany is of great significance in this connection;
- to make the task of improving the living conditions of the poor one of the principal objectives of the pastoral and educational work, both in the South and in the North, which corresponds to the Church's basic option, and thus help deepen the general awareness of these problems in the community. Church kindergartens, schools, institutions and

adult education centres have an important role to play in this respect;

- to arrange contacts and meetings between local Churches and parishes in the South and in the North, for instance through sponsoring arrangements and partnerships, in order to improve exchanges and mutual understanding.

Conclusion: Courage, Strength, Perseverance

The examples of practical solidarity outlined above require the participation of as many as possible who are dedicated to their cause and willing to make personal sacrifices. They need to have the perseverance that will help them to overcome many setbacks and disappointments. The South African theologian Albert Nolan has spoken of a political-mystical process of reversal and growth and described it in four characteristic stages of development.\* The first phase is determined by sympathy, which expresses itself in spontaneous help. In the second phase poverty is recognized as a structural problem which requires deliberate political action. Then, in the third phase, the strength of the poor is discovered, from whom in the very first place the non-poor must learn. The idealization of the poor which easily emerges from this process changes during the fourth phase into genuine solidarity with them which can no longer be destroyed, not even by disappointment and discouragement.

Those Christians who joint the solidarity movement will learn, and should constantly be aware, that the practice of justice is also the practice of their faith. The Christian God cannot be loved and experienced in any way other than the transfer of his love to the poorest and in the sharing of their hope of a different future. Many who have gone back to solidarity with the poor insist that the poor have converted them anew.

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\* Albert Nolan, *Der Dienst an den Armen und geistliches Wachsen*. London 1985. German edition: Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax (Bonn) and Schweizerische Nationalkommission Justitia et Pax (Bern) 1986.

The strength of perseverance that is inspired and constantly renewed by the faith is not the least that Christians can contribute to the development process. It enables us to resist the pull of resignation and the temptation to indulge in phantasies of omnipotence. In this way we are following the example of Christ, who in the desert was tempted to turn stone into bread and who, trusting in God, resisted the temptation to go for quick solutions at the expense of human freedom and instead stood by the poor and underprivileged and helped them bear their misery. Our faith in him promises us "new heavens and a new earth where, according to his promise, the justice of God will reside" (2 Pr 3,13). We live and pray in active expectation of the fulfilment of this promise. "The prayers and actions of the just" (D. Bonhoeffer) are the crucial poles of Christian existence for the one world. From it Christianity derives its strength, radiance and perseverance.

Institutions

ADVENIAT	Episcopal Campaign - Solidarity of the German Catholics with the Church in Latin America
AGEH	Association for Development Aid - German Catholic Agency for Personnel Development Cooperation
DESAL	Centro de Desarrollo Social de América Latina, Santiago de Chile
GKKE	Gemeinsame Konferenz Kirche und Entwicklung - Joint Conference Church and Development in the Federal Republic of Germany - Organizer of the Ecumenical Dialogue Programme
KAAD	Catholic Service for Foreign Students
KAEF	Katholischer Arbeitskreis Entwicklung und Frieden - Catholic Council for Development and Peace - Predecessor of the German Commission for Justice and Peace
MISEREOR	The German Catholic Bishops' Organization for Development Cooperation
MISSIO	International Catholic Missionary Agency Aachen/Munich

Documents

BASEL European Ecumenical Assembly for Peace and Justice - the Document, 1989

CA Encyclical "Centesimus annus" marking the centenary of *Rerum novarum*, by Pope John Paul II, 1991

EF The German Catholic Church's contribution to Development and Peace, resolution of the Joint Synod, Würzburg 1975

EN Apostolic letter "Evangelii nuntiandi": Evangelization in the Modern World, by Pope Paul VI, 1975

GS *Gaudium et spes*, pastoral constitution of the Second Vatican Council concerning the Church in the Modern World, 1965

GsF Justice creates Peace, declaration by the German Bishops' Conference, 1983

ICFB Instruction of the Congregation on Christian Freedom and Liberation, 1986

IM *De iustitia in mundo*, Bishops' Synod, 1971

KMR The Church and Human Rights, working paper of the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace, 1976

MM Encyclical "Mater et magistra": On Recent Social Development in the Light of Christian Doctrine, by Pope John XXIII, 1961

MV

Human Rights and Reconciliation. Message  
from the Bishops' Synod on Evangelization  
in the Modern World, 1974

PP

Encyclical "Populorum progressio": On the  
Evolution of the Nations, Pope Paul VI,  
1967

PUEBLA

The Evangelization of Latin America Now  
and in the Future, a document of the third  
General Conference of the Latin American  
Episcopacy, Puebla 1979

RM

Encyclical "Redemptoris missio": On the  
Continuing Validity of the Missionary Task,  
by Pope John Paul II, 1991

SRS

Encyclical "Sollicitudo rei socialis": Twenty  
Years after the Encyclical "Populorum  
progressio", by Pope John Paul II, 1987

UH

Our Hope, resolution of the Joint Synod,  
Würzburg 1975

# Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax

The German Commission for Justice and Peace was established by the German Bishops' Conference and the Central Committee of German Catholics. Its thirty members represent the Bishops' Conference and Central Committee, Catholic associations, diocesan councils and Church charity organizations as well as academia, politics and the media.

## Purpose

The purpose of the German Commission for Justice and Peace is to make Christians aware of their duty to seek global justice, to further human and social development, to defend human rights, and to promote peace between individuals and peoples. To this end it stimulates and supports Church activity in the cause of development, human rights and peace. At the same time it is a vehicle for cooperation between the Churches and fosters dialogue in the political sphere and in the community at large. The Commission is itself responsible for developing a consensus within the Church in the pursuit of its goal and acts on its own behalf.

## Publications

The German Commission for Justice and Peace issues a book series entitled "Entwicklung + Frieden" (Justice and Peace) through the publishers Grünwald (Mainz) and Kaiser (Munich), as well as working papers, documents and brochures under the heading "Gerechtigkeit und Frieden" (Justice and Peace). Lists of all publications can be obtained from the secretariat.

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